

“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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“**S-steal some...**”

“**F-fireworks~!?**”

We raised our voices together.

“Saijoh! Are you serious?”

“Yeah.”

Well, to be honest, with this guy it was hard to differentiate when he was and wasn't serious.

“B-by fireworks... you mean the big ones that go boom? Not the ones that they sell in stores?”

“Yeah. You can buy the ones they have in the stores, right?”

“You're lying, right?”

“I'm begging you. You guys are the only ones I can ask.”

“D-don't joke around. We haven't committed any crimes yet!”
Takaaki-kun said.

Everyone's response to that was,

“Yeah. Except your assault incident.”

“Yeah. Except your misdemeanors.”

“Yeah. And, except your road traffic violations.”

“Yeah. And, except your interference of a public servant in the execution of his duties violation.”

“Yeah. And, except your public nuisance violation.”

“Yeah. And there was your obscene exhibition...”

“Yeah. And there was the postal items...”

“T-that's enough... I was wrong... Yes. I've committed some... crimes...”

“But Saijoh. Larceny's dangerous. Even I can't do that.”

“Yeah... I know too well... I know, but...”

<note>

I have decided to give a title to this 5th volume from the beginning. It was of course done with much meaning behind it. I have shared most of the stories in “Bokuchu” with my students and college friends, but I have never shared this one. It might have a different feel from “Bokuchu” up till now, but I wish to write it, even if it means losing the readers that we have gained. If you can read along, it would make me very happy.

By the way, I'm sure all of you have had “handcuffs” placed on you at least once or twice, but for me this was my first time.

["Bokuchu" Us vs the Police: 700-Day War] Volume 5 "Fireworks Thieves" Chapter 1: Secret Weapon Today once again, on the back of my bike was Saijoh-kun.

Well, it wasn't only us. The greater half of the train commuters rode on the back of bike commuters. But, that was only until last year.

Since that Chuzai-san was assigned here this year, it was harder to do. He was very picky about two people on one bike.

Because the RPS was on the way to the station, we were easily seen and warned.

But that was only for the normal virtuous students; we were a little different. I mean, we were also very virtuous like temple monks. We already knew that Chuzai-san would yell out, but by that time, we were past that area. We were ok no matter how loud he yelled. But...

One day. That situation changed.

As usual, I was taking Saijoh-kun to the station. There were some others too.

"What do you want to do? Do you want to get off in front of the RPS?"

"No, I don't like doing sneaky stuff like that! Let's charge through!"

"Gooooo!!!!!"

That's how we passed in front of the RPS.

But.

"Wait right there!"

"H-huh?"

Chuzai-san would usually come out of the RPS and yell, but that day he started chasing us with his bike.

"Wha? Wha? Whaaa?"

Saijoh-kun from behind,

"Run away!"

"Even if you say run away, we've got two people riding here."

Chuzai-san had also said that he was "former track team" (from "We are Turtles").

"It's ok!"

Said Saijoh-kun. On what basis?

"Listen. When gravity is constant, speed is also constant regardless of mass. So we can lose him!"

Idiot! That's **"the law of falling bodies"**! Just because you just learned it, don't try to apply it to real life! On top of that, you're just riding, right?

There was no way the law of falling bodies was going to apply with bikes and sadly we were caught (this day 2 groups for a total of 4 people).

"Fu Fu Fu Fu. Guys. Doing the same thing day after day after day..."

"But now. We also have a secret weapon."

“By secret weapon, you mean your bike?”

“That’s right! It’s called Bicycle Number 1!”

You named your... bike... On top of that it’s “bicycle Number 1”... that’s just a description. On top of that, it wasn’t much of a secret. Everyone knew that the RPS’ have bikes.

“You guys.”

“Yes, yes.”

“You’re thinking that just because there’s no punishments for bikes that it’s ok, right?”

“What? What? That thought hadn’t even crossed our minds...”

“We were regretting it greatly. Deeper than the school swimming pool!”
that was the right answer.

“Your regret is very shallow...”

“But when you stand in it, the swimming pool covers your head.”

What were we arguing about...?

Chuzai-san was already totally used to these “pointless joke attacks.”

“Even I... have no intention of letting you guys run wild like this forever.”

“Okay.”

“With other kids, they usually stop after I warn them once, but...”

“...”

“It seems that you guys are a little different so I thought of a punishment.”

“Whaaat?”

A police officer, on top of that the one from an RPS, was coming up with punishments independently...

“So today, you guys will be sweeping the town.”

“Huh?”

“Umm. You couldn’t hear it?”

“You guys will be sweeping the town today!”

“Umm. Did you hear that?”

“Yeah. More than enough.....”

Ten minutes later, on the road by the shopping district, were four admirable high schoolers with brooms and dustpans.

“Oh my, boys. How admirable.”

“Thaaanks. We have to keep our town clean, you know?”

We were greeting old ladies walking by with smiles on our faces.

“Shoot. Wait and see, Chuzai!”

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The next day.

Saijoh-kun came to school with something strange. No, it wasn't in the same category as “*M Fan.”

“Hey. Look at this.”

“What is this?”

It was an odd metal object that resembled a [dynamo](#).

This is something I acquired from Manoc, when I was in elementary school, it's called an anytime match.”

Manoc Co. At the time, they were a mail order company that advertised in most boy magazines and sold suspicious items. Although they were suspicious, to boys at the time, the many fascinating items that were shown were popular, even more so because you could purchase them with stamps.

Saijoh-kun after lighting this mysterious match (it didn't look like a match) said,

“This can create a flame in any weather. With this...”

And started telling us his plan to subdue Chuzai-san.

“Whaaaat!?”

His plan for counterattack was exorbitant, but on the flip side had an element of fun that only he could come up with.

“Ok! Let's try it! Chuzai will foam from the mouth.”

We immediately got to preparations.

After calling out the first year Jaime (Tange-kun),

“All right, with this money, go buy as many bottle rockets as possible.”

“What? What are you guys doing?”

“Hmm. A fireworks festival. Grand fireworks festival.”

“Eh? Cool. I wanna join.”

We looked at each other.

“Ok. Sure. We'll let you join.”

“What? Yay!”

Because he was the smallest out of our members, he was especially ideal for sitting on the back of a bike.

“Well then, you're the in charge of the inventory. Hurry, go buy them.”

“Affirmative!”

The rest of us bundled up 10 pieces of pipe and created a bottle rocket launching platform. It's shape resembled the South American instrument, “[quena](#).”

That's right. The plan was that we were going to set a bunch of bottle rockets and fire them all at once at Chuzai-san, who would be chasing us on his bike.

Entitled, Operation "Even [Oda Nobunaga](#) will Turn Pale."

We were excited about this one. It was a really good idea for Saijoh-kun. At the time, there weren't any warnings on bottle rockets, so we used them for many things.

So we split up into three groups, Murayama and Chiba (the guy in volume 4 that imitated Kudou-sensei) pair, Saijoh and I pair, and dragged in Great Inoue-kun to pair with Jaime behind him. We then rode off separately by bike. We headed towards the front of the RPS.

Let me explain the plan here.

On the bike that Saijoh-kun and I were on, we had set the pipe launcher that could fire ten bottle rockets at once. This was because at the time bottle rockets came in bunches of ten. Great Inoue-kun's bike was to ride next to ours and supply us with bottle rockets. Now we were able to continually launch bottle rockets. Ten at a time at that!

Murayama group was to ride by first as a decoy. In our flawless plan, we figured that Chuzai-san would start his pursuit when he saw the first group, so with this, we were able to place some distance between our "launcher" and Chuzai-san.

All right. Start the operation.

"Jaime, got the fireworks?"

"Yes! I'm totally ready! But, where are we going?"

"Don't worry about that. All you have to do is hand us the bottle rockets."

"I understand!"

"Ah. Ten at a time, all right? Take them out of the bag and hand them over."

"What? Ten, right? Roger that! Senpai!"

After the Murayama-kun pair blazed past the front of the RPS, Chuzai-san came flying out. It was according to the plan. Finally as the four of us passed in front of the RPS, he said

"You guys again!?"

It was the exact same pattern as yesterday. Chuzai-san started chasing us on his bike.

"You guys! Don't underestimate Bicycle Number 2!"

Chuzai-san's secret weapon had become number 2 at some point.

But Saijoh-kun in the back,

"H-hey, he said n-number 2."

"Yeah."

"I, I wonder if it's got more features?"

Why is this guy scared over something meaningless?

On top of that, today we have our own secret weapon, too.

After a while, we separated from the Murayama pair and made a left with the other bike next to us. We proceeded to a road without pedestrians. They were, after all, bottle rockets. We had no idea where they would fly. If we troubled others, it would become more than a prank.

But this road was ok.

Because it was no longer a downhill, it became a huge strain for the person pedaling, but it was “improbable” that he was going to catch up. After all we had our secret weapon! It was awesome.

And as Chuzai-san came to about 20 meters behind us, Saijoh-kun started lighting the bottle rockets that were set, one after another!

“Fire!!”

Peuh——

Peuh——

Peuh——

Peuh——

Peuh——

The bottle rockets were fired one after another! Chuzai-san was stunned!

“W-whoa!”

Chuzai-san, startled, started swerving. The effect was exceptional!

“All right! Jaime, give me more!”

“What? O-o-o-ok!”

But then...

What Jaime handed him was,

“W-what is this! These are sparklers! Give me the bottle rockets!”

“Umm... There’s no more bottle rockets.”

Huh?

“Why not!? We told you to buy as many as possible!”

“But... senpai, you said grand fireworks festival... it’s boring with only bottle rockets... So I got different ones...”

“Ehhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!”

“We have a lots of fountains though.”

“Idiooooooooooooooooooooooot!!!!”

Ten minutes later, in the hot, shining, summer sun, was seen the figures of four high schoolers picking up trash, this time in a significantly larger area than last time (the whole town).

“Oh my my. How admirable, to be out here every day.”

“Thaaanks. We have to keep our town clean, you know.”

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There was something unexpected waiting for us when we finished our trash pick up around the shopping district.

“Mr. Policeman, we finished picking up the trash.”

Why did we have to go report like we were in elementary school cleaning duty? All we needed was a class log to be squad leader.

“Ok. Good work out there in the heat. I poured some iced tea for you guys inside, drink up.”

“What?”

“What’s wrong? You’re not thirsty?”

To these unexpected words from Chuzai-san, we were a little shocked. But our throats really were dry. After we entered the RPS as told, we saw the iced tea, enough for all of us, that his wife probably poured.

“By the way, guys. Those bottle rockets.”

“Yeah...”

“That’s really frightening. Don’t do that anymore.”

“Okay...”

“My conditioned response almost made me shoot.”

“Your conditioned response almost... um... what?”

Chuzai-san pointed at the holster on his side.

Hmm. Even we were scared at that.

After telling us this much, Chuzai-san left for patrol. We were left in the RPS by ourselves. It was tranquil even for the countryside.

Saijoh-kun, as he finished his iced tea,

“Hmm. I guess that’s what you call ‘rope and whip’.”

“Idiot. It’s supposed to be ‘candy and whip’^{*1}.”

“I see. They say it like that, too?”

They don’t just say it like that, that’s how it’s said!

“But then.....”

“How do you do torture someone with candy?”

“No... The candy’s not a torture device...”

I disliked myself for even answering.

But,

“Hmm. Candy, huh... I guess that’ll work, too...”

Listen to me already!

Saijoh-kun was nodding to himself, but how was it “working”?

“By the way, his wife poured these, right?”

“Yeah, probably. I can’t imagine that Chuzai-san pouring it.”

“Whoa. I’m licking the cup!”

So Saijoh-kun started licking the droplets of water around the cup. I didn’t mind him licking the cup, but stop moving your tongue around! Your tongue! Why is your tongue pointed!?

And there!

His wife came in from the entrance today.

Pah-☆。.:*・°

“Thank you for the hard work “



“Ah! M-m-ma’am!”

Why are you stuttering?

“Ufufu. You got caught again “



“Yessss. W-we were in the middle of receiving a little **rope and whip** right now.”

We hadn’t been whipped... What kind of situation was that?

Wife,

“Whip?”

“Ah. No, Ma’am. We were just WHImPering from the hard work. Thank you for your concern.”

Great Inoue-kun and I tried our best to cover.

“Oh? He poured iced tea for you guys? “



“Hve!? You weren’t the one that poured these!?”

Said Saijoh-kun who had been licking the cup for a while. With his tongue pointed for that matter.

Hmm. It’s rope and whip, right Saijoh?

“By the way, I bought some ice cream. Please have some “



“Yaaay!”

We acted like we were in elementary school.

At the time, unlike the big police boxes, the small RPS’ didn’t have stuff like coolers. With the windows and doors wide open, the summer breeze rang the wind chime. Time moved a lot slower than it does now.

Naturally, the heat meant that people dressed lighter. Now as before, high schoolers were filled with youthful vigor, and Chuzai-san’s wife dressing lighter was on our minds. Sometimes when the breeze would blow, her shirt sleeves would move about and give us a glimpse of her white brassiere.

“What... a nice breeze.”

“Really. It’s a nice breeze.”

In actuality, there was no way that she could know that the “nice breeze” that we said, and the “nice breeze” that she said, had totally different meanings.

*1 English equivalent of this is the carrot and the stick.

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“Thanks for the food.”

Murayama-kun and Chiba-kun from the early group were waiting for us outside when we left the RPS.

“Must have been tough.”

Murayama-kun said.

“No, no. His wife gave us ice cream, so we were fairly lucky.”

I replied.

“On top of that, we got the grand light dress service from his wife!”

That was Saijoh-kun.

No, it wasn’t like she was dressing lightly for us.

To that, Murayama-kun and Chiba-kun asked,

“Wife? Chuzai’s?”

with their faces filled with wonder.

“That’s odd...”

“Why?”

“Because. We were cooling off at the supermarket and Chuzai-san’s wife was there the whole time.”

“Stop lying. You’re just jealous because we got to see her dress lightly.”

Saijoh-kun seemed to be more thankful about that than the ice cream.

“No. She was shopping. Right, Chiba?” “Yeah. No mistake about it. This one was dressed lightly, too.”

“What!? Ours was definitely more lightly dressed!”

Saijoh. Stop competing over light dress... of someone’s wife...

But then, we all looked at each other. Beauties like that aren’t just lying around all over the place. If they were lying around, we would pick one up. By the way, the new character “Chiba-kun” from volume 4 was the younger brother of a police officer who said, “Waseda boat club” in “[We are the Wind](#).” This guy’s jokes weren’t very witty, but we had a lot of trust in what he said.

What does that mean?

Two wives?

“Is she still there? I mean, the fake wife.”

“Ahh. She might be. We just left not too long ago.”

Was there anything so bizarre? We made a party with 6 people and headed to the supermarket.

“Geh! It’s true! It’s the wife!”

“See. It’s no mistake, right?”

“W-what is that?”

"T-twins? I haven't heard that though..."

Even her clothes and hair were the same! Was it teleportation?

So we decided that we would observe from afar. Back then though, supermarkets were regulated to their size by law, so it wasn't very big. Even though we felt like we were hiding, or maybe I should say that the more we tried to hide, the more suspicious the six of us looked.

Then, at the same time, Saijoh-kun and Great Inoue-kun said,

"No. That's not the wife."

"How do you know?"

To this Saijoh-kun replied,

"It's because the wife's brassiere had a single hook, but this person's has a double hook. To put it simply, this person has a larger chest."

Ohhhhhh.

Even if it had to do with brassieres, we were greatly surprised by his insight. But when did he confirm that much?

"Saijoh, you're amazing. To go that far, it's admirable."

"Fu fu fu. Stop the praising, you idiot."

I wasn't praising you, you idiot.

"Inoue, did you figure it out by her brassiere, too?"

"Do be stupid! Don't put me with Saijoh!"

He said with expected resentment.

"I... can kind of tell. She looks totally different from the wife..."

"Hmm."

"By the way, **your little sister Yuko-chan uses a single hook A-cup.**"

Once again, unnecessary comment...

"You! What parts of a ninth grader are you looking at!?"

A quiet fist fight had started with Great Inoue-kun. Inoue-kun was understandably angry.

"By the way, senpai."

"What is it? Jaime?"

Bra

"What's this double hook and single hook about?"

"Idiot. You don't know anything, do you?"

He's the last person you want to hear that from. It was information that wouldn't be an obstacle if we male high schoolers didn't know it for our whole lives.

"If you turn at the very end there, there's a rack. There's a lot of brassieres there, so go yourself and check!" Saijoh-kun said.

"You've even memorized where they're displayed?"

"What? N-no. It's because I come here a lot with my mom! I, I have a general idea of where things are!"

"I see. Then where are the tomatoes?"

"T-t-t-t-t-tomatomatomatomo? The tomatoes were, let me see... I think they're over there. Over there!" Obviously not specific...

“How about the tampons?”


“The middle and bottom shelves in the next aisle! The sanitary napkins are on the top. The ones for night time use are on the right.”

“All you know about are things like that!”

Our very conspicuous stalking was made even more conspicuous by this good-for-nothing disturbance, and we were very much seen by the wife look-alike lady.

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The clone wife finally finished at the register and left the store. The glimpse that we caught of her conversation with the cashier lady only made her look even more like the wife.

We decided to leave the store and follow her some more. But, for some reason, our conversation was still dragging along the “tampons” from before.

“Why do you know where the tampons are anyways?”

To this Saijoh-kun replied,

“Hmm. Spring of knowledge?”

“Sounds like a useless spring.”

“No way. It comes in handy sometimes!”

“Like when...?”

“That one time! To Kudou! Remember that time when someone replaced his chalk with tampons?”

“Ahh. Kudou-sensei went into a rage.”

“Why should I hide it. That was Lord Me.”

I see. So the reason why all of us got called out that time was because of your “Lordship”...?

“But there were 6 left over. That was a problem.”

“Six? That’s an odd number.”

“Fufufufufu. **That’s kids are such a burden.** Things like that contain one weeks worth.”

Ohhhhhhhh.

To this, everyone nodded. Spring of knowledge it was... Though, it did seem useless after all.

“Oh yeah. Should I give them to Yuko-chan, Inoue?”

“No!”

“Really? They’re still usable.”

“Where is there a brother that gives his little sister tampons as a present!?”

“What? They don’t?”

What did this guy think sisters were for?

“Oh, I see. Yuko-chan’s a napkin user!”

“That’s not what I meant!”

“I guess it can’t be helped. I guess I’ll play with the neighborhood kids with the applicators.”

Applicators... If it weren’t for this, it would have been a word that we never would have had a relationship with. On top of that, to play with kids using the applicators... How?

While we were arguing over such petty things, our distance to her grew a little.

“Why don’t we just talk to her in person and ask her?”

When I thought our conversation had finally gotten reasonable, I heard
“**What? Ask if she uses tampons or napkins?**”

“No... It’s about time you moved away from that, Saijoh.”

After a little while, the lady went into the RPS as expected.

“So she really is the wife’s twin?”

“Hmm. It would be amazing if she was.”

“Yeah. It’s amazing that there are two beauties like that in the world.”

And as we were peering into the RPS,

Following some noisy sounds,

“Where are they!?”

Chuzai-san made an appearance. So, he was back.

Following him was his wife, no the other lady?

“I’m not sure, but they were following behind me saying **tampon this, and brassiere that!**”

“Ok! I’ll go arrest perverted bastards like those immediately!”

“There were 5 or 6 of them. They looked like high schoolers but they were so gross!”

What?

Judging by what was being said, it seems she was talking about us.

“Ok! I’ll catch them no matter what!”

Chuzai-san was totally motivated.

We decided that it was time to leave our position.

But,

“Ahh! There, it’s those kids!”

Oh no. We felt like we were in trouble, even though we had no idea what the trouble was.

“All right. Hey! You high schoolers over there..... Oh, you guys again?”

“Mr. Policeman. Good afternoon... Thanks for the food last time...”

Chuzai-san seemed shocked beyond words.

“What? You know them? Brother-in-law-san.”

“Yeah. There’s no one that doesn’t in this neighborhood. They’re the brat group that I told you about last night.”

“Ah! These kids are the party of perverted high schoolers?”

“Party of perverts” were pretty harsh words for a first meeting.

Hearing the commotion, the “real wife” also came out. Everyone was there now.

“Oh... Hi kids...”

At this point, we explained our situation for the first time.

“Ufufufu. Are you surprised? She’s my little sister. She’s actually three years younger.”

“Really? Even then, you guys look really alike.”

“Really really. We wouldn’t have known the difference if it wasn’t for the double hook.”

“What? Double hook?”

“N-nothing. I see; she’s your little sister.”

“Pleased to meet you. I’m her little sister Minako. My sister’s family is indebted to you guys.”
We finally received a proper greeting.

But Chuzai-san,

“Don’t be stupid! They’re the ones that are causing me trouble!”

“I’m not sure why you guys are stalking, but that’s not good. You want to get shot!?”

“S-sorry.”

According to the wife’s introduction, Minako-san was a college student studying science in Tokyo. She just happened to be on summer break now and was staying with her sister to study the stars.

Leaving that, they really were identical.

At this point, Great Inoue-kun asked Minako-san,

“Um... How long will you be staying over here?”

“I plan on staying at least until [Bon festival](#). I can see the [great summer triangle](#) really well here. It’s not possible in Tokyo.”

“Is that so... Till Bon festival...”

Watching him, I kind of understood why Great Inoue-kun was the only one who was able to tell them apart. That’s right. He had fallen in “love” with Minako-san.

Saijoh-kun then said,

“By the way, Minako-san...”


“Yes?”

“Will you please show me your wrists?”

Ahh... Party of perverts...

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From the next day, we stopped riding two to a bike, at least in front of the RPS. There was the chance that next time we would have to sweep the entire town. We wanted to avoid it because last time's in-town sweeping was really tough because we were under the sweltering sun. We were tired of sweeping. In that respect, Chuzai-san's "punishment" had totally hit its mark.

Of course, we had absolutely no intention of admitting defeat.

There was a big reason for spending the effort to go past the front of the RPS.

That's right. It was because Great Inoue-kun wanted to catch a glimpse of the wife's little sister, "Minako-san." He didn't say anything, but we already understood it.

Coincidentally, that day, we were going home with exactly the same people that were part of last time's sweeping.

There was a shrine at the end of the shopping district after passing in front of the RPS.

In front of the shrine [torii](#), there was a lady talking to the Shinto priest. It was someone we had seen before.

"Ah! There! They're the young men I was just talking about!"

"I see," responded the priest.

By "young men," was she referring to us?

"Young men, over here! Come over here!"

"What? Us?"

The six of us hesitantly went over, not understanding what was going on.

The lady (she was an older lady) said to the priest,

"You know these young men? They're remarkable. They're sweeping the town every day."

"What? Huh?"

Oh! It was the lady who talked to us when we were forced to sweep.

"That's true. Rare for youngsters these days. You guys go to the local high school?"

"Y-yeah. That's right."

She repeated remarkable over and over. She sang our praises. It didn't feel bad.

"No, no. Well, we were just doing what comes naturally as a citizen. Right?"

Saijoh-kun was beside himself with joy. After all, he wasn't used to being praised. He must've been really happy. There was no way that we could say that it was "punishment for riding two to a bike."

“Is that so? That is remarkable. I have something to talk to you guys about.”

“Yes?”

“It’s the priest. He’s pretty old and you see in this heat? He was saying that sweeping the grounds, and especially the stairs, is really tough!”

“Huh?”

“And so I was just telling him about you guys.”

What!?

“And so. Can we have you guys sweep the shrine today?”

There was a staircase called the “heart-masher stairs” that numbered over 150 steps. It was no joke!

“The festival is coming up, too. Don’t you think it should be cleaned, as a citizen?”

“N-no...”

But then,

“Sorry about that... Thank you very much... I’ve got... a weak heart, so...”

The tough looking priest was giving us a feeble “thanks.”

The lady then,

“Well then. Work hard! You guys really are rare for youngsters these days. There’ll probably be some divine favor, for sure!”

Adding to that,

“Oh! I almost forgot! I should introduce you guys to the Buddhist monk, too!”

You secular hag!

Two hours later,

“Was the shrine this big?”

“Why... are we doing this?”

“It’s tough to do three days in a row...”

“It’s because you said fireworks festival, senpai...”

That was Jaime speaking.

“Y-You’re going back that far!? You’re the one that bought all those fountains!”

“But... fountains are so cheap and pretty.”

“Man, this place really is huge. This is almost as big as a ball field.”

True. We had already spent a lot of time sweeping.

“But see. This is a shrine right? They must make a lot of money. There might be some reward.”

“Ah! You can say that again!”

“Like, **‘you guys can do what you want with the money in the offertory box.’**”

Yeah. That’s not happening. But it was true that all of us were hoping for something. After all, this wasn’t a normal amount of labor.

At that time, the priest trotted over “**vigorously**.” Was it ok for him to be running over here at full speed with his weak heart?

“Hey, you guys!”

“Yes, yes.”

“I forgot to tell you but...”

“That’s the neighbor’s property.”

Don’t forget to tell us that!

After we had finished sweeping 150 steps, we had also been sweeping some random neighbor’s property.

We were already pooped out and our throats were dry.

“Oh, before I forget... You guys,”
The priest said.

Yay! Everyone’s eyes were bright with anticipation.

“Thanks for today. I can’t really call this an expression of gratitude, but take them and split it up among you.”

And what he gave us, enough for everyone was,

[Omamori!](#)?

Our disappointment cannot be expressed in writing.

On the way home.

“I hope we get some divine favor.”
“It’s not like we can throw these away.”

“On top of that, that shrine had dog’s...”

Hmm?

When I looked at the omamori closely,

Easy birth

Divine favor... would be a very troublesome thing... for us.

God. We’re bad kids that always doing bad things.
Please don’t give us your divine favors...

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“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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That Shinto priest gave us leftovers from New Years!?

(*In actuality, the only person who received an easy birth omamori during this incident was Murayama-kun. The others received safe transportation omamori's. Yeah, yeah. I've wrote some lies. I told you it was half-fiction, right?)

But. The blessing from the “omamori” amazingly had God's grace on at least Great Inoue-kun. No, not easy birth.

It happened after we finished sweeping the shrine and came down the heart-masher stairs. It had started to get dark, and we could hear the evening cicadas from the shrine's cedar grove.

We saw the figure of a woman coming up the stairs from below.

That was...! Chuzai-san's wife's little sister, in short, Minako-san!

“Ah!”

“Oh? You guys are yesterday's...”

“Good evening. Minako-san.”

“Party of perverted high schoolers!”

“That's not right...”

The exhaustion from the sweeping blew out of us.

“Are you doing something... to the shrine?”

Umm. Isn't that question phrased wrong?

Normally it's “at the shrine,” right?

What does she mean by “to the shrine”...?

“But my brother-in-law said that you guys are doing evil-deeds somewhere every day...”
Chuzai!

“T-that's not right. We were voluntarily sweeping today at the shrine.”

“Hmm. Umm, and what was that a punishment for?”

She didn't seem to understand well, or maybe I should say she understood too well...

“Anyways, what are you doing out right now, Minako-san? At evening time.”

“Is it a date?”

For some reason, Great Inoue-kun looked down in response to Saijoh-kun's question.

That's right. At the time, the shrine was a popular place as a date spot or meeting place in the country. Murayama-kun gave Saijoh-kun a low kick in response to his question.

“Ufufu. No, it’s not. I don’t have any acquaintances here. I’m looking for a place where I can see the stars well.” She said while pointing at the large telescope that she was carrying.

“Oh! Do you guys know of anywhere that I can see the stars well?”

“Ah! My room, **especially well from on top of my futon!**”

Said Saijoh-kun to which Murayama-kun gave him a vicious elbow.

“Let me think. I think near the Hime-pond would be ideal in this area.”

“Hime-pond?”

Hime-pond was the “One Day I Met a Bear” pond where Saijoh-kun and I were almost left by Chuzai-san. There was a clearing in the vicinity and since the town’s light was blocked, it was an ideal place for stargazing. But, even more than that, Great Inoue-kun’s house was on the way to Hime-pond.

“Can you see the stars well there?”

“Yup. Even better than well. You can identify [Ultraman](#)’s family in galaxy M78 with your bare eyes.”

“Yeah. We saw Ultraman’s family on a picnic last time. Right?”

“That’s right. Ultra’s mom brought a rice ball that was about 5 meters.”

“Taro was saying it was delicious while eating it.”

“Ufufu. You can even hear their voices? You guys are really funny. Just like my sister said.”

“This guy’s house is close so you should have Inoue guide you there.”

“Well, maybe I should take you up on your offer?”

“Yeah. But it’s dangerous at night, so you should have him go with you. Hey, Inoue, you ok with that?”

“Y-yes, of course.”

“That’s right, that’s right. It’s dangerous so I’ll go along, too!”

To Saijoh-kun who was adding an unneeded distraction, Murayama-kun gave an Ax Bomber, while saying, “Saijoh, I heard that the trains stop running at 6 today. If you miss it, you’ll be in big trouble.”

It seems as though Murayama-kun was taking into consideration his friend Inoue-kun’s “feelings of love”. But stop running at 6, what kind of unpopulated town were we?

Saijoh-kun finally realizing Murayama-kun’s consideration,

“Ah. That’s right. Come to think of it, my mom had just collapsed from a serious illness. I need to go home.” I hadn’t heard that before. But to be frank, I was touched by seeing their friendship.

But Great Inoue-kun.

“Yeah, but it’s dangerous with one person, so why don’t some of you come along, too?”

“True... You have a point.”

Because Hime-pond had a clearing and was close to the next city, there were rumors that delinquents would congregate there on the weekends. And today was the weekend.

“Then, just to be safe have Saijoh or Takaaki go with you?”

I think things would be unsafe in a different manner...

“Saijoh-kun’s that strong?”

To that question by Minako-san, Chiba-kun replied.

“He’s not just strong. He was battling with [King Gidora](#) the other day.”

Saijoh-kun,

“Yeah, but he had three heads so he was really good at insults. He could say three insults at once.”

Minako-san once again laughed out loud.

H-h-h-how cute! Maybe she was even cuter than her sister (Chuzai-san’s wife).

“But I shouldn’t...”

“No. We don’t have anything tomorrow anyways. And nightlife is part of our extracurricular activities.”

“Oh! I know. We have fireworks that we bought by accident the other day. How about we all get together at Hime-pond?”

That’s right. We still had the leftover fireworks that Jaime bought by accident.

“Nice idea! Let’s call everyone! It’ll be safer that way.”

“How about it, Minako-san?”

“Ok. Sounds like fun. I’ll be happy to.”

“Yay! It’s a fireworks festival!”

I see. Jaime was looking forward to it that much... Saying “yay” as a freshmen in high school...

“You have a lot of fireworks, right?”

“Yeah. I do! Twenty sparklers and... 40 fountains.”

What the heck?

“Because. I like fountains.”

Will..... everyone come.....?

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“Ok! Coming up next is a fountain!”

Jaime was really excited.

“Next up is what you’ve been waiting for! A fountain!”

Fountain

“All right! The next one will be amazing! A fountain!”

“Right! That one was pretty! What do you think is coming up next, everyone?”

Dragon

“... Fountain...”

“Bingo! It’s a fountain!”

“.....”

“Hey. You told me that it was going to be a fireworks festival, why do we only have fountains?”

Takaaki-kun and the others that came later were seething in unhappiness. They were complaining at me for calling them.

“Yeah... There’s deep reasons for this...”

Jaime fiercely argued this.

“What!? If things went according to senpai’s plan, these would have all been bottle rockets.”

“Like I said, the bottle rockets had a purpose!”

“Those ugly ones aren’t even fireworks!”

“...”

After saying what he wanted, Jaime once again got excited.

“All right! The next fountain! Guess what kind of fountain it’ll be?”

“... The same kind, we think...” We responded.

“No, it’s not!”

“What? Is there some trick?”

“Next is two fountains at once.”

“SIGH.....”

So it’s a fountain after all... Well, he did say that was all he bought, so that’s all there was.

To Jaime, who was getting even more excited,
“Hey. How many more fountains do we have...?”

“Don’t worry! There’s a lot!”

“No, we weren’t worried about it. How many are left?”

“Hmm. About 50. We already used a lot.”

“What? Didn’t you say that we had a total of 40?”

“Oh, no, Senpai. I bought some more with my own pocket money.”

“What!? Fountains?”

“Of course. Because it would’ve been a problem if we didn’t have enough.”
It wouldn’t have been problem for anyone...

“You didn’t think at all of getting a variety of fireworks?”

“What? Of course.”

What did “of course” mean?

It was torture for this many of the same fireworks to be used.

On the other side of the clearing from our fountain festival (it was already not a fireworks festival), were the figures of stargazing Minako-san and Great Inoue-kun who was keeping her company. Well. It’d be ok as long as they’re doing well.

It turns out that, including those that came later, a total of 14 members came to Hime-pond. The excuse was “we’re doing a fireworks festival, so come.” Of course, if we had told them, “Chuzai-san’s wife’s little sister is here, so come,” everyone would have come, but if we had done that, it would have been impossible for us to give priority to Great Inoue-kun, so we kept the “woman” part hidden.

Of course, the members that came were surprised after seeing Minako-san! I mean, she was the wife that we were yearning for, but younger and single. It was hard to hold it in. But as long as we were able to control Saijon-kun and Takaaki-kun, it was unlikely that the others would rebel, so it wasn’t a bad number.

But. This fireworks festival was a bigger surprise. From the beginning it was **a—————-ll only fountains .**

Have you all experienced this? The agony of the same fireworks going on and on. The occasional sparklers looked like beautiful jewels to our eyes.

Since we were bored of fountains, we started whispering amongst ourselves about Great Inoue-kun.

“I’m really surprised. That Inoue... He didn’t seem like he had any interest in the wife.”
Well, it was a problem for these guys to have an interest in the “wife,” too...

“Well. She does look different when you look closely. It’s like she’s more lively than the wife.”

“I see. I wonder if that’s what got to him.”

“It seems so. It was almost love at first sight.”

“But she’s 2 years older than us, right?”

“Yeah, she’s a college student.”

“You know, Inoue’s little sister Yuko-chan is really cute, right? He can’t do younger. Probably.”
For Takaaki-kun, it was an analysis that went to the core.

“This probably won’t work out even for Inoue-kun, don’t you think?”

There was no doubt that even Great Inoue-kun agreed with that completely. But even before this, all of us always helped out other members “love.” It was because we had the relief of knowing that they would “usually be rejected.”

“Senpai!”

Jaime was in a rage over our whispering which was ignoring the fireworks.

“Senpai, you’re just making me do them and not even watching the fireworks, huh!?”

“What? Hmmm. It’s ok. I’ve already memorized the fountains completely.”

“All right. If you says so, senpai...”

After saying that, Jaime lit about ten fountains at once and started throwing them at us!

“Y-you idiot! W-what are you doing!? H-hotttt, hoooot!”

It wasn’t even on the scale of the word dangerous.

“Woah! Hot! You idiot! Hott.”

Of course, it wasn’t like Saijoh-kun and Takaaki-kun to just be beaten, so they picked up the fountains and threw them back at Jaime.

But Jaime lit fountain after fountain and threw them indiscriminantly. Pandemonium. Sparks were flying everywhere. It was like having a snowball fight with fountains. It wasn’t on the same level as dangerous. Man, they were hot.

Ironically, these were the most beautiful fireworks of the day.

Minako-san, seeing this, was doubled over with laughter. Next to her was a happy looking Great Inoue-kun.

But fun times pass in an instant much like the fireworks.

“Should we go before it gets too late?”

“We should.”

“Tonight was really fun! Thank you Inoue-kun, everyone.”

The clock had past 9:30. As we tried to leave, a couple youngsters on motorcycles arrived next to us, but this was expected, and Saijoh-kun and Takaaki-kun quickly chased them away.

There was a full array of stars in the sky.

At the end, Minako-san said,

“Oh, oh. Today Ultraman’s family was eating hamburgers at Mc Donald’s. It was about 8 meters.

We laughed. But at the time, country folks had no idea what Mc Donald’s was (sad).

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Not long after the fountain festival, our “summer vacation” finally arrived. We heard that Minako-san liked Hime-pond as an observation point, and was going there everyday. Because of it, Great Inoue-kun had plenty of opportunities to meet with the “person he yearned for” and he also seemed like he was going to Hime-pond often.

Great Inoue-kun, who was smart to begin with, had absorbed Minako-san’s knowledge and was on his way to becoming a “serious astronomer.” To say what was “serious” about it, if you ever saw him, he would start telling you about Greek mythology and the stories of the constellations as if lecturing. He really was an astronomer that was causing “serious problems” around him.

But. It was also true that the limit was steadily approaching him.

That’s right. Minako-san was “here until Obon.” Basically, once Obon passed, she would be going back to Tokyo. There was something inscrutable in Great Inoue-kun’s feeling.

And. On the day of the summer festival, which was closing in on Obon, the biggest incident for us was about to happen.

Normally, it was only until middle school that kids would go willingly to the summer festival. It definitely wasn’t something that someone in high school would go to happily. At a glance, our group looked like they would “enjoy festivals,” but in actuality, that was precisely the case and we argued about it last year.

“Takaaki, you went to the festival yesterday, didn’t you?”

“D-don’t be stupid! I didn’t go!”

“Uh-huh. Don’t lie. I saw you at the festival.”

“That means you were there, too!”

“Wha!?”

When you make fun of someone, you need to check your own steps.

“N-n-no. I... I just took my elderly mother there.”

“What’s up with that story like “Old Japanese Tales”!? If you went, just say you went!”

“Now, now. I confirmed that both of you were totally there.”

“Then, you were there, too!”

“Wha!?”

“N-no, I wasn’t! I... I just heard from my friend that I went with.”

“So you WERE there!”

“Wha!?”

“Now, now, you guys.....”

We had a trivial spiral-like loop argument.

But.

This year was different!

We decided that we would all go to the festival boldly...

... because...

... it was “us that swept” the shine where the festival was held.

It was because of the interfering secular hag, and the healthy Shinto priest with the bad heart, that we spent three hours cleaning this shrine. As expected, because we spent that much time, we had become somewhat attached to it. We decided that we would be on “festival patrol.”

There was the daytime and nighttime festival, we of course chose the nighttime. Of course, we chose it because it was more exciting.

Because Great Inoue-kun might have an adventure with Minako-san, we didn't invite him, so it was the other 5 people who swept, and a couple other members we talked to.

The scenery of the nighttime festival then is no different from how it is now.

Bogus looking booths lined up.

The smell of burnt sauce and caramel.

Women in [yukata](#)'s coming and going under the lights of the bare light bulbs...

If anything, I think there were more “bogus looking booths” at the time.

The way that Saijoh-kun's spirit was energized was dreadful.

He was warning anyone and everyone!

“Hey! You middle schooler! Don't toss your losing ticket! Throw it away in the trashcan, the trashcan! I'll break your arm!”

“Mister! Throw your cigarette butt away in the ashtray, the ashtray! There was one at the entrance, right?”

“Brat! Don't toss your chopsticks! Bring it home as a gift to your mom! She'll appreciate it!”

Like that, he made a big deal by yelling regardless of if it was a five year old or a hoodlum, so we really stood out. Because of it, the whole festival had a seemingly different feel.

“Crap! People worked hard to clean this shrine. What are they thinking!?”

Because we were standing out so much, there were some people who noticed our actions.

By the landing of the heart-masher stairs,

“You guys are here, too?”

It was Chuzai-san who had come as a guard.

It was the biggest festival of the year. Chuzai-san was obviously there as well as the security reinforcements that were called in from nearby cities.

“P-Policeman! When you smoke, smoke by the ashtray up there!”

Saijoh-kun launched a warning even at Chuzai-san.

“No. Unfortunately I can't smoke while on guard, but... What are you so uptight about?”

The shrine sweeping, if you go back to the beginning, was caused by Chuzai-san giving us the “Two to a bike punishment.”

We included why we had to sweep the shrine in our short explanation to Chuzai-san.

But, Chuzai-san hearing this.

“Bu.....Buwa ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.”

Great laughter.

“S-so that’s it. You guys swept this whole place? Wa ha ha ha ha.”

“Yes. Part of the next property as a bonus, too.”

“T-t-that’s remarkable! Wa ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.”

Infinite great laughter.

Crap! There was no way we could let this slide!

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Chuzai-san found our “sweeping situation” extremely hilarious.

Because it upset us, we immediately changed our location to the darkness of the cedar grove, and started milling a plan for revenge.

The plan was decided in an instant.

We quickly went down the stairs and to the soft cream shop's booth.

Most festival soft cream shops are stingy. Big helpings couldn't be expected. So, while the young man was pressing the soft cream machine,

“Ah! Mister! A hornet's on your back!”

“What? What? What?”

The young man was startled. Because of it, we got an extra huge helping of the soft cream. Lucky!

We didn't touch this soft cream and just waited on standby.

Then, as expected, the people we were waiting for arrived. They were the policemen on patrol. Of course, they were different from Chuzai-san. The policemen on patrol looked to be higher ranked than Chuzai-san. Because the organization used the seniority system, it was easy to tell.

After we confirmed this, we blended in with the crowd, climbed the stairs stealthily, and returned to a location where we could see Chuzai-san.

Start the mission!

I went to where Chuzai-san was.

“Mr. Policeman. Have you seen Saijoh and the others?”

“W-what's going on, Girl Bike? You lost them? Wa ha ha ha. As a high schooler!? Wa ha ha ha.”

Crap. He said it in a way to get on my nerves.

“Yeah... kind of.”

“I haven't seen them. If you go to the cotton candy shop, he might be there sucking on his thumb. Wa ha ha.”

What kind of guide was that?

Without hesitation,

“Uh, m-my stomach, my stomach hurts.”

“?”

“M-Mr. Policeman. S, sorry, but I need to go to the bathroom, **hold these** please.”

And what I gave him were the two soft creams. They were the ones with the extra huge helpings from the soft cream shop.

“I, I'll be right back!”

With that, I disappeared in the crowd leaving the dumbfounded Chuzai-san.

All that remained was Chuzai-san holding the soft creams, one in each hand.

Man. He really stood out.

The people coming and going to the festival would look at him like “what is this policeman doing while on duty?”

But the soft creams, because they had to be upright so there was no other way to hold them. Chuzai-san was making a last stand holding soft creams in both hands. Weird guard.

But, it was after that where soft creams become **dreadful weapons**.

Even though the nights were pretty cool, it was summer. The soft creams finally started to melt and drip onto his hands. Every once in a while, the troubled Chuzai-san would nonchalantly lick the soft cream that had gotten on his hands. There was no other way around this situation.

At about this time, Chuzai-san, having been done in by us a number of times, realized that this was a trick.

“Crap. Remember this, Girl Bike.”

And as he said these words grudgingly, Chuzai-san finally started licking the soft creams themselves.

“Ahh. It would probably be so refreshing if I could use them as target practice...”

What frightening things to say coolly!?

At that time.

Finally the people we targeted, in short, the policemen on patrol, came up.

“Good work!”

“Yes, sir! Thank you! Nothing abnormal here.”

Chuzai-san saluted while holding the soft creams (lol). There was no way his superior wouldn’t see it and,

“What are you holding?”

“T-these were at the request of a citizen...”

“If you accept things like that, how can you do your job!”

Chuzai-san was harshly scolded.

But because he was being scolded more than we imagined, even we felt bad and trotted over to where Chuzai-san was.

“Mr. Policeman! Thank you very much!”

We went and claimed our soft creams.

And further,

“Ahh. How fortunate there was such a nice policeman. I was greatly troubled after being refused by everyone.”

I said towards his superior on purpose.

“You saved me! Mr. Policeman, you’re my savior! Truly, thank you very much!”

After this unnecessarily high praise,

“He’s the Chuzai-san from ** RPS, right? Our town’s so blessed to have such a wonderful person assigned here!”

We added.

Of course he couldn’t condemn his subordinate who was being highly praised by a citizen and he said

“Well, well... when you’re in any kind of trouble, come consult a policeman...”

His superior left the area.

Well. With that much reinforcement, it would probably be all right, even though Chuzai-san still had an angry expression...

And...

As the people became sparse, and it was close to the end of the festival, the incident occurred.

“Ah, I finally, finally, found you!”

“Huh? You’re... Yuko-chan?”

That’s right. The person who came towards us totally out of breath was Great Inoue-kun’s little sister, Yuko-chan.

Saijoh-kun,

“That’s no good. Yuko-chan. I told you to dress in your yukata for festivals, right?”

When did you say that? That’s just your own desire!

“N-now’s not the time for that! My brother, my brother’s in big trouble!”

I’ve written it a couple times already, but Yuko-chan’s family, in short, Great Inoue-kun’s family was a very strict household, and totally didn’t allow girls to be out at this time.

It was telling us that “something serious has happened.”

“What happened to Inoue!?”

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<Warning>

All right. Although “Bokuchu” has been totally goofing off until now, because this story is a half-documentary, there were some serious things that happened, and this incident was a major event that even developed to the point of being in the newspaper. Because of it, this will be the first serious story since we started. There’s absolutely nowhere to laugh. I’m sorry.

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By her tired expression, we could tell that Yuko-chan must have been looking for us for a while.

“Umm. My brother suddenly said that he would go to Hime-pond and if he didn’t return in a hour, to contact everyone, and handed me this.”

On the paper was written, “I’m going to Hime-pond. If I don’t come back contact them,” and about eight of our members phone numbers were scribbled under it.

“He said if they didn’t pick up the phone, they should be at the festival. So I snuck out of the house...”
Yuko-chan was already half crying. It was already a big deal for her to have snuck out of the house and come to the festival.

We panicked.

“So basically Inoue went to Hime-pond, right?”

We had a basic understanding of the situation from just the note. Hime-pond became a meeting place for delinquents on the weekends. Tonight especially, with the night festival. There is no telling who would show up. Inoue-kun, worried for Minako-san’s safety, probably headed for Hime-pond. It was approximately 20 minutes from Inoue-kun’s house to Hime-pond. If he wanted to bring her back, one hour would have been more than enough. If he didn’t come back in an hour...

I stopped thinking further than that.

“I called... but no one was there...”

Yuko-chan said, half crying.

That’s right. Most of the members whose number were listed were here. (Just to be certain, I remind you that this was a time far from cell phones.)

“What about Takaaki?”

“Takaaki-san wasn’t there, either... I left a message with his older sister.”

“Eh? What? W-with that sister, ... y-you talked with her, Yuko-chan...?”

Yuko-chan nodded.

“Y-you’re brave, Yuko-chan...”

Saijoh-kun was impressed.

That's right. Takaaki's sister was the leopard print sister from [volume 4](#) that everyone feared. Saijoh-kun especially dreaded her.

"Just leave the rest to us. Murayama, you take Yuko-chan back to her house."

"Got it."

"And you Jaime, go look for Chuzai-san and confirm with him that Minako-san went to Hime-pond, right away. If she did go... Tell him to head over to Hime-pond ASAP."

"Affirmative! Senpai."

"The members who came here by motorcycle head over to Hime-pond now. Don't wait for the slow ones. Start looking for Inoue as soon as you get there."

I hadn't mentioned it before other than Saijoh-kun, but all of our members except Inoue-kun and Jaime had motorcycles. But the engine sizes had a large range, from 50cc's to 400cc's depending on the financial situation and strictness of the family. I had a Yamaha Mate 50cc, and my girl bike.

"Chiba, you go and get as many of the other members as possible. We'll meet at Hime-pond!"

"OK!"

We'll meet at Hime-pond.

Although the points may have sounded good, we, excluding Saijoh-kun and Takaaki-kun, were definitely not used to these situations. To tell you the truth, my heart was beating heavily as I rode my motorcycle.

I prayed that at least Takaaki-kun would arrive there first. He would be able to deal with two or three hoodlums.

We headed towards Hime-pond at full speed (that being said, we were only going about 60 km/h (40mph)). After a while, next to us appeared a woman riding a 650cc Yamaha. It was a bike we didn't recognize. Rather than that, it was rare for a woman to be riding a bike this big, so Saijoh-kun and I were surprised.

The woman, opening the visor on her full face helmet, said

"Guys!"

W-what? Minako-san? ... No...

Ma'am??

"Whaaaaa!?"

The wife yelled with the bike's sound in the background.

"Surprised? I used to ride."

Of course we were surprised.

"It's Secret Weapon Motorcycle Number 1!"

Motorcycle Number 1... Both husband and wife used just a description...

"I'm worried about my little sister, so I'm going ahead!"

The wife spurred her 650 with amazing acceleration. So cool... Saijoh-kun with his Dax and me with my Yamaha Mate, saw her off, stunned.

"The rumor that she was a former ladies... was true..."

"Yeah... what a surprise..."

(from "[Main Characters Featured up to v3](#)")

When we finally reached Hime-pond, Inoue-kun was nowhere to be seen.

“Crap!”

The people that arrived earlier (with faster motorcycles) came to report.

“Inoue’s bicycle’s over here!”

Following that, the wife came over.

“Minako’s telescope was over there... on the ground...”

No way...

“I’m going to look over there.”

The wife left on her motorcycle.

“It means that they were taken somewhere?”

“Deeper. Let’s look deeper.”

“How do you know?”

“When doing something bad, most people want to go deeper, right?”

“I see.”

“The people that came with trail motorcycles (off road motorcycles) use them to look around. Either way, look for a place big enough to park a vehicle. The rest of you search while running.”

“Inoue———e”

“Inoue———e”

“Inoue———e”

“Minako-san———n”

We screamed as loud as we could.

I hadn’t even walked a hundred meters.

“Inoue———e”

“Ah! Over there! Look over there!”

There was something shining a couple hundred meters ahead.

It’s fire from a fountain.....

“Everyone! Over there! Head over there!”

Why was there a fountain shining? Why did I think Inoue-kun would be there? I can’t explain. But, without question, I was confident that they were there.

We discovered one motorcycle a little ahead of where we were heading.

“Hey. This is Takaaki’s CB!”

“I see. Takaaki got here before us!”

We calmed down a little bit. At least, things were a lot better than the gentleman Inoue-kun by himself.

“Inoue——e! Where aaarrre yooooou!?”

“Takaaki———!”

While we were screaming, about 6 motorcycles roared past us.

“Those guys...!”

“Hm? That’s...”

It seemed like Saijoh-kun had a clue about the guys that just ran away.

“Saijoh, you know them?”

“Yeah. Probably. I know most of the delinquents in the area.”

That was in a thicket a little ways from the road.

What we feared had become reality.

“Inoue...”

“Minako-san...”

There in the darkness was Inoue-kun lying face-down.

Next to him, as if to protect him, was Minako-san who had broken down crying.

And leaning against a tree while sitting was Takaaki-kun, still wearing his helmet.

Takaaki-kun said while taking off his helmet.

“Saijoh... You’re late. Idiot...”

“Sorry...”

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“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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“E-ev-ry-one... All of you came...”

Inoue-kun turned his head while in the prone position. The many bruises on his face told us the severity of the situation.

I couldn't say whether or not Minako-san was safe.

“Takaaki...”

“Hm... Minako-san's ok... Inoue... tried his best. Praise him, guys.”

“Yeah. Yeah.”

Inoue-kun, being helped up by his friends, was finally able to talk.

“Erm... I'm glad Takaaki came...”

“Hmm. Six at once is tough... as expected.”

Takaaki held his abdomen.

Or so I thought, when he took something off his abs and slid it out.

It was

“What? This? It's my grandfather's corset (back brace). Well, I have a helmet for my head. All I need to do is protect my abs to reduce damage.”

As one would expect, people used to fighting were different.

“But this chafes during the summer. My grandfather is probably a shrimp about now...”

That was a relief.

“What about that light?”

To this question Takaaki-kun answered:

“About that. I had some left over in my pocket from the other day. From the fountain war...”

“I heard your voices, so I lit one. As soon as I did, they ran away.”

“Oh, I see...”

“Jaime's love for fountains, to be useful at a time like this... ha ha...”

“Ha ha ha.”

We laughed for the first time then.

“Everyone. I'm sorry...”

Minako-san apologized with crying in her voice.

"It's not something you should apologize about, Minako-san. We're the ones who originally showed you Hime-pond... Never mind that, are you ok?"

All Minako-san could do was nod.

Finally the rest of our friends came, as well as the wife.

Even that usually calm person was in a haste and,

"Minako. Are you ok!?"

"Yes... these kids protected me..."

"You guys, thank you... I don't know what to say..."

The wife was also crying.

Even though we were thanked, most of us only came afterwards, so we were totally distracted by the fact that the two of them next to each other in the dark, totally looked alike.

"But. Why were their bikes over here?"

"Dunno... maybe it was planned."

Saijoh-kun who had been silent until then said,

"Takaaki. That's Chaki from Vocational, right?"

"Yeah... No mistake..."

"Ok, got it."

Saijoh-kun left the area after he said that. Chaki was a famous delinquent who attended the vocational high school in the next city and was "notorious" because he had so many suspensions, that he had to repeat a year.

"Saijoh! Don't be rash!"

But everyone knew that it was useless for any of us to try to stop him.

Takaaki-kun then said,

"It's ok. Saijoh doesn't get into fights he can't win. He has friends other than us, too. He had to settle it with Chaki someday anyways. Let him do as he wants."

It was as he said. Saijoh-kun didn't only hang out with us; he had a relationship with another group, too. I remember feeling that Saijoh-kun, who was always with us, always felt a little distant and lonely.

After a while, we could see the red lights of the police car so we signaled our location with the motorcycle headlights. There was another policeman and Jaime in the police car.

After confirming the situation, even Chuzai-san was pale in the face. It was because she was the sister-in-law that he had promised to keep safe to his wife's family. How he must have felt, knowing that she had gotten into an incident in his jurisdiction?

"Minako-san! Are you ok?"

He tightly held the nodding Minako-san.

But!

All of us seriously objected to this!

It was because we had all prepared to have a fight with the delinquents, coming with what little bravery we had, and didn't even get a chance to swing. We had become a lot more ferocious than normal.

“Hey! Cop! You have your wife!”

“That’s right. We don’t have a wife! Retard!”

“Why are you putting your hands on both beautiful sisters during this commotion!”

“I’m jealous! Damn you!”

“You three-some man!”

Well. Even though we were high schoolers, we were punching and kicking the policeman. The policeman that had come along was in dumbfounded.

“S-shut up!” Chuzai-san said, as if shaking us off.

“Yeah. But you went too far.”

The wife said.

“U-um... I, I...”

To this, even Chuzai-san was helpless.

But at this time, smiles returned to everyone’s faces including Minako-san’s for the first time. Everyone was so tense that they could cry. As if to play off our uneasiness, we laughed for a long time.

“Inoue, I’m sorry. Thank you.”

Chuzai-san apologized to Inoue-kun who was finally walking with help.

“Ha ha... I never thought that I would be thanked... by you, Chuzai-san... It seems we’ve finally lost our astuteness...”

Great Inoue-kun was being as tough as he could.

“By the way. Inoue...”

Takaaki-kun said all of a sudden.

“Hm?”

“I... Did good this time, right?”

“Yeah... You’re a savior...”

“So then...”

“Yeah?”

“If there’s a request from that savior. You’ll listen to it right?”

“... Yeah. Say anything you want.”

“Yuko-chan’s bear, can you give it to me?”

“... Not a chance!”

No matter what the situation, Great Inoue-kun was still protective of his little sister.

“What!? Didn’t you just say that you would listen to anything!?”

“That’s why I listened. That you wanted the bear.”

“You only listened!?”

“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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Great Inoue-kun, Takaaki-kun, and Minako-san went straight to the hospital for treatment. The rest of us went to police headquarters to give testimonies before the day was up, so it was past 1AM when we got back.

The next day, I retraced all the things that went on the night before and spent the day in a daze.

But. That night, another big incident occurred.

As the clock went past 10:30 pm, a phone call came through. It was Takaaki-kun.

“S-Saijoh’s hospitalized!?”

“Yeah. I just got contacted by his friends.”

“Have you contacted the others?”

“No. You’re the only one who can move after 10.”

That’s right. At the time, the latest high schoolers could call was around 9 pm. Being out was even harsher. But my family was a little different.

“Anyways, I’m going to pick you up now! Let’s try to go to the hospital.”

“Ok. I’ll be waiting.”

I had a general guess as to the reason for his hospitalization.

I rode on the back of Takaaki-kun’s CB after he picked me up and headed straight for the hospital.

But.

“By the way. Is it ok to bring nothing? We’re going to the hospital.”

Takaaki-kun said.

“That’s true, too. How much do you have right now?”

“Me. 300 Yen.”

“I have 600 Yen.”

“Total of 900 Yen, huh. We’ve had a lot of expenditures lately. Let’s go buy a get-well gift.”

“That’s true. It’s not right to go without anything.”

But unlike now, it was a time before any convenience stores, so there were no stores open.

Then Takaaki-kun said

“I know a store of an acquaintance; I’ll go buy something there.”

With that, we changed our heading to the shopping district.

Eventually Takaaki-kun brought back some kind of package from the “store of an acquaintance.” He handed me the package.

Since I was worried about the way the package felt,
“Takaaki. What’s this?”

“Hm... Bo.....ms”

Takaaki-kun said in a uncomfortable whisper.

“What was that?”

“It’s bo...rk...gr...ms”

“Um. It may just be me, but I thought I just heard boned pork...”

“Like I said... boned pork meat 900 grams.”

“You fool——!”

“It can’t be helped, right? It’s a butcher. Even then, he gave us 100 grams extra!”

“Why are you so proud of that!? What kind idiot brings ground pork as a get-well gift!?”

“But the butcher also said that it’s good fortune to bring meat as a get-well gift!”

You... You are absolutely being tricked!

“It’s better than nothing, right?”

“I, is it...?”

It felt like nothing might be better.

“But. He said to eat it as soon as possible. The expiration date is tomorrow or so.”

He’s been tricked after all...

I’ve never heard of anyone bringing boned pork meat with an expiration date as a get-well gift. I was already in the far off land of gloom while holding on at the back of the motorcycle.

After a little while, we arrived at the city hospital, but it was midnight. The front entrance wasn’t open. We quickly headed for the emergency entrance. With the boned pork.

As soon as we entered through the entrance, an older nurse appeared.

“Visitation hours has already past.”

“We know. There’s a guy named Saijoh...”

“Oh. Are you acquaintances of Saijoh-san?”

“Yes.”

After hearing this, the nurse made a very troubled expression.

“Well... it can’t be helped then. Come this way...”

And let us through.

“Is Saijoh in bad condition...?”

“Yes. He might not make it through the night... Sadly.”

“What!?”

Takaaki-kun and I were startled.

“He’s in an intensive care room right now. Please be quiet. His relatives are already assembled there...”

His relatives were assembled... We were frightened.

There were a lot of people who seem to be Saijoh-kun’s relatives assembled around the entrance of the intensive care room. The reason why we couldn’t see his mom was probably because she was inside.

Oh... no...

Finally from inside, one older lady came in front of us.

“I, I don’t know what to say about this...”

The lady responded to our greeting with a silent bow.

“This... isn’t anything special, but...”

Takaaki-kun handed the lady the package of boned pork. It really wasn’t anything special. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say there could be nothing less as a get-well gift.

The lady.

“Thank you very much... By the way, are you... students at the calligraphy class?”

“... Calligraphy?”

“... Students?”

-> -> -> -> -> ->

We were once again on the motorcycle.

“Idiot——! It’s the wrong city hospital!”

“Well. Now that I think about it, Saijoh lives in the next city.”

“Fool——! Because of it, we left the get-well gift there!!”

That’s right. We couldn’t ask them to return it now, so we left the get-well gift of boned pork meat there. On top of that, leaving boned pork that’s expiring tomorrow for someone who might be on the verge of death tomorrow, can only be thought of as harassment.

“But that nurse... We said his full name and all.”

“Yeah. Who is this Saijoh Zenbei?”

And so after making a serious mistake on the person, or I should say, after making a serious mistake on the hospital, we headed for the city hospital in the next city.

But the city hospital in the next city wouldn’t let us ordinary visitors through, and the guard bluntly sent us back.

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The next morning with Takaaki-kun and Murayama-kun accompanying me, the three of us went to the “next” city hospital.

This time, all three of us got our get-well gifts separately. Pushing that aside, I wonder what Saijoh Zenbei-san who was on the verge of death last night did with that expiring boned pork meat. It kept bugging me.

Wait.

“Takaaki. Isn’t that a package from the butchers again?”

“What? T-this time it’s ham. Ham. It’s not weird, right?”

“You brought something perishable again?”

“B-because they say that meat products are good fortune as get-well gifts. When I asked today, he said that, “ham is even better!”

This guy... is being tricked again... Chocolate for Valentine’s day was probably spread in a similar fashion. Someone spirited but stupid like this guy probably said, “chocolates will make your love come true!” But seeing that I don’t ever hear “meat is good fortune as a get-well gift” now, the butcher’s trick stopped at only Takaaki-kun. Of course it did.

Saijoh-kun was hospitalized in the surgery ward.

Saijoh-kun appearance was atrocious. Half of his head and face were covered in bandages and he also had bandages on his arms.

“Saijoh... you...”

Saijoh-kun was silent.

It was because at the time, Saijoh-kun was totally nailed onto the butt of a nurse working with her back turned to him

Saijoh, after finishing a thorough observation, said

“Oh? You guys are here?”

What a dreadful greeting.

“Things look pretty hard...”

To this, Saijoh-kun answered in a whisper.

“Yeah it is... You know the white gowns? You can see the definition of the lines more than expected. Terrible, right.”

No. I didn’t say “hard” in that meaning. It’s embarrassing to be thought of as an accomplice with him saying “right.”

“I can almost tell the pattern... but this ambiguity... right?”

No. Like I said, it’s embarrassing to be told “right?”

"That's not what I'm asking. How are your injuries?"

"Yeah, it seems like my nose and my rib are broken. The problem seems to be my eye socket. Well, it's not too bad."
To this, the nurse who was just being "observed" by Saijoh-kun responded.
"It's not too bad isn't the case! Your eye was really close to flying out."

"But still..."

At that time, more of Saijoh-kun's visitors arrived.

They were a plain-clothes Chuzai-san and Minako-san.

"Ah! M-Minako-san! ... And police!"

"Am I just on the side?"

"C-come in, come in. Over here. Even though this place is squalid."

He motioned to only Minako-san.

Minako-san bowed her head deeply.

"Since you were the only one not there, I thought this was the case."

Chuzai-san said.

"It looks like you put on quite a show."

"Yeah... well."

"Chaki was prosecuted. It wasn't his first offense. He'll probably be going to juvenile hall."

"Is that so? I guess it's time for him to pay up..."

"He was hospitalized with heavy injuries, too, but it seems like he's not going to prosecute you guys. ... The problem is the school."

That's right. Saijoh-kun had already received two suspensions for good-for-nothing things. One time was the vehicle road violation from "We are the Wind," and the other one, predictably, was an act of violence. It wouldn't be unexpected if he were to be given "expulsion treatment" this time.

"I did contact the school and asked them to make it light, but they're a different organization. I'm not sure what'll..."

"I'm sorry. It's all because of me..."

Minako-san apologized sincerely.

"Well, it's ok. I don't like to study anyways..."

Even though he said that, he couldn't throw off the anxiety of "expulsion."

We lost our words, too.

To tell you from the results, Saijoh-kun ended up just being suspended during his hospitalization. Rumor, that was taken as the truth, had it that his homeroom teacher Shirai Kyoko-sensei did her best to suppress it, but in reality the truth seemed to be that Great Inoue-kun's father, who was one of the big wheels in the prefecture, used his power.

Saijoh-kun was staring silently at the window for a long time.

But. As expected, there was a nurse working with her back facing towards us there...

"By the way. Saijoh."

"Yes?"

"I brought you a get-well gift."

As he said that, Chuzai-san handed him a package.

“Oh, and this. I’ll return it to you.”

He took out a picture frame.

That was

The “even more outrageous photo print!” that we used in volume 4 “Sunset Shoot-Out.”

That’s right. It was the dreadful photo print that would sober up 100 years of love.

“Should I hang it around here?”

“H-how un-adult like, Chuzai! I-in front of Minako-san, too!”

But something like this was only a farce compared to the upcoming big incident that we would be wrapped up in.

At least for me...

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“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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We were alternately visiting Saijoh-kun from day to day, but it was a little while after the hospitalization before the guy in question, Great Inoue-kun, went to visit Saijoh-kun.

Great Inoue-kun's family was a very strict one, and because he was caught up in the incident, it didn't matter who was responsible; he wasn't allowed to leave the house for a while.

But he finally got permission to leave and today he was visiting with his good friend Murayama-kun and I.

“Saijoh. Sorry for not making it earlier. This is a get-well gift. It's not much, but...”

It was an assortment of gorgeous fruits.

Compared to Takaaki-kun and my “boned pork,” there was a huge gap between the “not much.” Back then “bananas” were still considered a treat.

“Don't make a fuss about it. Inoue.”

Saijoh-kun said while petting a pineapple. He looked really happy.

“I think my little sister is coming later.”

“What!? Yuko-chan is!?”

He looked even happier.

“Yeah. I don't have any other sisters.”

“A-are you going to say ‘it's not much’ and leave her here, too?”

“I'm not leaving her!”

At that time, the nurse who was assigned to Saijoh-kun came to change his bandages. I'm not sure why this guy has this kind of luck, but this nurse was also a really pretty person.

But. Because she was in the occupation of watching over life or death matter, she was about as strong willed as Takaaki-kun's older sister.

There was no way that Saijoh-kun wouldn't be frivolous over a beauty like this,

“M-miss! W-would you like to eat some fruit? It's not much, but...”

Great Inoue-kun.

“You said it's not much, but isn't that the get-well gift I brought you?”

“Eh!? Didn't you say that it wasn't much?”

“You don't say it! Idiot.”

The nurse, while skillfully working,

“There's no way I can eat while on duty. But you have a lot of friends, Saijoh-kun.”

“Yeah. Well. I guess you can call it karma. If you have this many **mourners**, it's more emotionally tiring. Ah ha ha.”

Mourners... are you dead?

"What are you saying!? Be thankful. All right, done!"

She gently tapped the bandage on his arm after.

"O-ouch..."

"Come to think of it, Mika-chan's not here today."

Mika-chan?

A-a girl?

Great Inoue-kun, Murayama-kun, and I all looked at each other.

Well. In certain aspects, Saijoh-kun was a character that had a lot of female contact, but that was all either one-sided from Saijoh-kun or as a result of his delusions, and there was never a time that a real girl's name would come up.

"Who's... Mika?"

To our question in unison,

"Hmm. **Saijoh-kun's lover**. Right?"

The nurse replied.

"Lov... I, I guess that's what they call it?"

"Nurse, it must be some mistake?"

"She comes to see him everyday! She's very devoted. She's really cute, too!"

Ufufu, the nurse giggled.

"Huh... Is... that so?"

There's no way...

In actuality, this day there really were a lot of "mourners." Jaime came to visit as well as Chuzai-san visiting again. Though, Chuzai-san was here partially to wrap up the case. Chuzai-san was in his uniform that day.

And. During that day, we would come to know Saijoh-kun's "mystery lover."

"Saijoe!"

All of a sudden a girl almost flew into the room. She was about six or seven years old.

She certainly was cute. She closely resembled Yuko-chan when she was younger.

"Saijoe! H-huh? Guests again?"

"Mika. Didn't I tell you not to forget the -san?"

"Is this person police? Saijoe, is he your friend?"

His small lover Mika-chan said while pointing at Chuzai-san.

"Hmm. This person's not a friend but a **f-o-e**. He's a very scary person."

What are you teaching a little child?

"Does he bully Saijoe?"

"Yeah, yeah. He bullies me a lottt."

"Hey, hey."

Chuzai-san said with a bitter smile.

"Saijoe's a good guy so don't bully him!"

Whoa. Her unreliable use of Japanese was cute!

"Okay, okay." Replied Chuzai-san.

"Mika, I'll give you an apple so stay over there. I have something to talk about with these guys."

"Ok! Mika understands!"

Mika-chan trotted out of the room.

"Saijoe! Let's play later!"

"Saijoh, just... because you're not popular with the ladies, you're putting your hands on a little girl like that?"
Chuzai-san said.

"D-don't be stupid!"

Saijoh-kun stuttered.

"You know. It's a crime at that age. I'll have to arrest you."

"What!? R-really?"

Why are you scared about that?

"Of course it is. That little girl's like a baby growing some hair."

"What?"

"What's wrong?"

"Mr. Policeman, you don't know anything."

"About what?"

"There's no way she's growing any yet.

Normally they're twelve or thirteen years old before they start growing, right?"

"Y-you stupid idiot! By "growing some hair," I wasn't referring to that!"

Saijoh...

This "Mika-chan" wasn't hospitalized here, but was coming along with her mother who was nursing her hospitalized little brother. This brother was supposedly seriously ill and the mother was almost always there, so the hospital was almost like a playground for Mika-chan, and the nurses, doctors and other patients were all comfortable with her presence.

I'm not sure why this child was attached to Saijoh-kun, but like I touched on in volume 3, he seemed to have an ingenious talent when dealing "with kids."

After a while, Chuzai-san finished conveying what ended up happening, and returned to duty. As if to replace him, Yuko-chan came to visit.

“Saijoh-senpai, were you all right?”

“Hmm. If I was all right, I probably wouldn’t be hospitalized.”
Saijoh-kun said. He was unusually logical.

“I was worried.”

“R-really? Then will you come in a yukata next time?”
What does that have to do with a yukata?

But. At this time, Mika-chan made another appearance!

“Oh my!”
Yuko-chan was surprised.

“Huh? Saijoe, who is this girl? She’s Saijoe’s lover?”

“Hmm, I guess you can say it like that?”

No, no. Absolutely not.

“This girl’s got absolutely nothing to do with Saijoe-kun. You can rest assured.”

“I see! They’re not lovers! But you’re cute. Like a doll.”

“Oh my. Thank you.”
Yuko-chan replied, not as dissatisfied as we thought she might be.

“By the way, Mika.”
Saijoh-kun said.

“You’re not growing any yet, are you?”

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“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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It was the next day when Saijoh-kun called all the members together. This day, he had called all of the members on top of Yuko-chan who had just come yesterday, so we got together wondering what was going on.

Since we had close to twenty people, we couldn't congregate in the hospital room or in the lobby, so Saijoh-kun left the hospital room and brought us together under a big tree in the inner courtyard.

“All right! Everyone's here. I apologize for having called you folks to a place with such bad terrain.”

“No, Saijoh. It's perfectly fine. Your Japanese is not correct.”

“Don't say things you aren't used to, Idiot.”

Hmm. What an unpopular guy.

“So then. On this day, I have gathered you here for none other than.”

“Like I said, stop forcefully using respectful language.”

“On this day. My plan was for you to thoroughly enjoy beautiful girls in swimsuits. It's not bad, right?”

“Huh?”

We responded.

“Saijoh, by that you don't mean Yuko do you?”

Great Inoue-kun was overcome with uneasiness. Especially because he was dealing with Saijoh-kun. Yuko-chan was in the hospital lobby, not here.

“No, no, I'm not. Yuko-chan's an A-cup anyways.”

“Leave it!”

“I'm ok with an A-cup.” Takaaki-kun responded.

“I am, too.” “Me, too.” “I am, also.” “As well as myself.”

“I shouldn't have brought... Yuko...”

Great Inoue-kun was reconsidering. If you ask me, I think it was an obvious development.

“That's not it. There's a lot of young lively girls.”

What's the catch...? We were all very doubtful.

“Ok! You guys brought your swim trunks?”

“Yeah.”

“I will now announce today's plan. I will ask you... to go to the public pool with her.”

He called Mika-chan (6 years old, real name), his “lover,” from yesterday.

“W-what did you say!?”

Mika-chan was understandably hesitant in front of this number of people. There was no blaming her. Especially with twenty mean looking guys.

“What? You took the time to get twenty people together just to take one little girl?”

“No. That’s not it, but to begin with, in the morning, take her to the pool.”

“So basically, play with Mika-chan in the morning?”

“That’s it. She’s at the hospital everyday. She doesn’t even have one summer memory.”

“If things continue like this, she won’t even be able to write her picture diary...”

We lost our words.

“I see. So that’s why you called Yuko, too?” Great Inoue-kun said.

“Yeah. There’s changing and stuff. If it’s just you guys, you guys will do bad things right?”
We’re not the same as you!

Mika-chan.

“Um... All of you retainers of Saijoe, please take care of me.”

“Retainers...”

“Saijoh’s...”

“Retainers...”

Of course, we didn’t refute a six year old, but all of us were stunned. What kind of introduction was Saijoh-kun making?

“... No, thank YOU for taking care of us...”

We were so shocked we mumbled our reply.

“Retainers...”

Saijoh-kun, after handing me one 100 yen coin,

“With this money, you can eat and drink all you want. In return give Mika a strawberry milk shaved ice to eat.”

Hmm. Even if you tell me all that I want... Strawberry milk costs at least 150 yen..... It was already not enough...

“On top of that...”

Saijoh-kun brought out 4 large packages.

“These. I had my mom make them. Lunch for all of you.”

“What!?”

This surprised us. We had twenty big eaters. It was mostly freshly made. We understood that Saijoh-kun was a lot more serious than we had thought.

“Mika. If you have something troubling you, consult this Retainer Number 1.”

He grabbed me and introduced me, but Mika-chan...

“Please take care of me! Retainer Number 1.”

It didn't even have a -san. Retainer Number 1...

"Please take care of me... Consult about anything. To this... Retainer... Number 1..."

The feeling of humiliation left me speechless. I get that she wouldn't be able to remember twenty names, but... Retainer Number 1. He probably got his hint from Chuzai-san's "Bicycle Number 1."

So that's how twenty of us squalid sixteen or seventeen year old guys ended up taking Mika-chan to the public swimming pool.

"I guess it can't be helped... I'll do this for Saijoh..."

Said Takaaki-kun. But although he had said it couldn't be helped, his legs were skip, skipping.

"Let's go together!"

Yuko-chan, who finally joined us, took Mika-chan by the hand.

The public swimming pool was split into adult use and child use. Because our objective was to play with Mika-chan, of course we all tried to go to the child use pool.

But,
Pi pi pi pi pi-

Predictably we were warned over the speaker by the lifeguard.

"Over there. High schoolers, please don't go into the small pool."

Because it couldn't be helped, we brought Mika-chan, who had a inner tube, to play in the adult pool. As much as everyone was grumbling about things, we really had a good time.

Mika-chan couldn't swim until that day, but Chiba-kun, who was on the swim team, taught her how to swim before long. Mika-chan was overjoyed at being able to swim for the first time.

Great Inoue-kun thought up game after game that kids enjoy, and we lost ourselves in games such as treasure hunting and diving races.

I myself, when we were playing tag alongside the pool, tripped over a grate and fell hard, hitting my chest and face hard.

But even to this, Mika-chan was laughing hard.

We must have been a bizarre group to those around us, but we did stuff like eating shaved ice and catching bugs at the park and enjoyed the summer fully.

Finally, a little after 2 pm, Mika-chan, tired from playing, had fallen asleep on Murayama-kun's back.

Yuko-chan.

"Mika-chan made some good memories for sure."

"I think so... It was a lot of fun."

"Her picture diary will be full for sure!"

In truth, we also had a lot of fun.

Mika-chan's mom was the one who greeted our return to the hospital. The mom, after thanking us over and over, took the still sleeping Mika-chan and went back to the hospital room.

I'm moving ahead of myself, but Mika-chan showed me her picture diary for this day.

A day that we did many things.


In her picture diary was a picture of the poolside and

“Today, Retainer Number 1 fell at the pool.”

That was your best memory!?

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We met in the hospital inner courtyard once again after returning from the pool. Although we sent Yuko-chan home first, her brother, Great Inoue-kun, who was one of the main members, stayed.

Thinking about it, the reason why Saijoh-kun invited Yuko-chan was his plan to reduce our dissatisfaction. I can only say that it worked wonderfully. As soon as Yuko-chan left, as usual, all the Yuko-chan fans starting with Takaaki-kun started clamoring.

"I... I drank some water next to Yuko-chan!"

"Heh, heh. I drank some water behind her! I drank about one liter."

"W-what!? I drank two liters!"

These guys really seemed to like these spiral-like loop arguments. It's the prevailing view to consider it a "shame" to drink pool water, but these guys were totally opposite.

Me? I drank some too, but it wasn't on purpose. It was because I was unskilled at swimming. Well, coincidentally it happened next to Yuko-chan. Let me think. I think I drank about three liters.

"Fu fu fu. You guys are amateurs. Getting excited over pool water. Look at this!"

It was a shaved ice spoon. Calling us amateurs, what was he a professional at?

"T-that's!"

"That's right! It's the spoon Yuko-chan used!"

"C-craap! I forgot about that..."

But. Great Inoue-kun tragically confiscated it.

Of course.

It wasn't the kind of boast that you should make in front of her real brother.

The reason why Saijoh-kun got us together was made clear in the afternoon. Our affection had totally switched to Mika-chan, and if you say it negatively, you can say that we were totally taken by Saijoh-kun's plan.

"You guys. Sorry about today. Mika-chan's mom was also really happy."

"No, no. It was pretty fun. We got to drink Yuko-chan's pool water, too."

Is it Yuko-chan's pool...?

Saijoh-kun.

"I guess what you should have are good retainers."

"Ah! That's right! Since when did we become your retainers!? Damn you!"

"That's right, that's right. I was called Retainer Number 9 the whole time! By a six year old!"

"That's not bad. I was Number 17! Stupid bastard."

As if to remember, everyone started kicking the injured Saijoh-kun.

"W-what, the words friend and retainer mean the same thing. I've retained you as my friends."

"What? Is it...?"

"Retained as friends... huh."

"There's no way! Retard!"

"You thought you said something good? Huh? You lunatic!"

The "retainers" once again started kicking the injured.

Once we were through venting our anger, Saijoh-kun:

"Owwwwie... M-moving on. The main thing I wanted to talk about today is..."

He started telling his "plan" in a whisper.

"S-steal some..."

"F-fireworks~!?"

We raised our voices together.

"Saijoh! Are you serious?"

"Yeah."

Well, to be honest, with this guy, it was hard to differentiate when he was and wasn't serious.

"B-by fireworks... you mean the big ones that go boom? Not the ones that they sell in stores?"

"Yeah. You can buy the ones they have in the stores, right?"

"You're lying, right?"

"I'm begging you. You guys are the only ones I can ask."

"D-don't joke around. We haven't committed any crimes yet!"

Takaaki-kun said.

Everyone's response to that was,

"Yeah. Except your assault incident."

"Yeah. Except your misdemeanors."

"Yeah. And, except your road traffic violations."

"Yeah. And, except your interference of a public servant in the execution of his duties violation."

"Yeah. And, except your public nuisance violation."

"Yeah. And there was your obscene exhibition..."

"Yeah. And there was the postal items..."

"T-that's enough... I was wrong... Yes. I've committed some... crimes..."

"But Saijoh. Larceny is dangerous. Even I can't do that."

"Yeah... I know too well... I know, but..."

"Mika... has a brother that's one year younger. He's called Ryo-kun. It's because Ryo's hospitalized that she's always at the hospital..."

To summarize Saijoh-kun's explanation.

Mika-chan's little brother, "Ryo-kun," was suddenly hospitalized about this time last year. I don't know what his

illness was (because Saijoh-kun couldn't remember), but he's been in and out repeatedly since then and his condition was at the point where he couldn't be moved.

Right before he was hospitalized, Ryo-kun, in other words Mika-chan's family, was supposed to go to the fireworks festival that's held in Y-City, but because of the hospitalization, they weren't able to go.

Mika-chan, although young, had held this in her chest and had requested to Saijoh that "she wanted to show Ryo-kun big fireworks once."

"Hmm. I understand how you feel, but..."

"Even then..."

"They have it again next year, right? I mean, the fireworks festival in Y-City. They should show him next year."

"It's that... There is no... next year..."

"What? Yes, there is. They have it every year."

"Yeah. There'll be a fireworks festival next year, and there'll be a next year for us. But for that sibling... there isn't a... next year."

We understood what he meant.

"Supposedly even next month is doubtful... much less next year..."

"Really?"

"The nurse assigned to him said so. There's no mistake..."

"....."

"How bout bringing him out?"

Saijoh-kun shook his head.

"....."

"That's why. That's why. Even one is enough. I made a promise to Mika... and Ryo... to show them big fireworks..."

Saijoh-kun's town and our town didn't have a large fireworks festival. At the time, cities that had large fireworks festival were really limited.

"She... thinks that I'm like Superman or something... I just couldn't refuse... see."

Saijoh-kun's voice cut off.

"Even then, to steal..."

"Can't we buy the fireworks?"

"I worked part time at a fireworks festival before, although it was as a parking organizer. But they made me help with the firework guy's preparations, so I know a little."

According to Saijoh-kun's story, the shells themselves are relatively cheap, and can be bought for under 2000 yen (at the time). Of course you couldn't launch them without launching power and because it was a hazardous material, they didn't sell it by itself. To say it simply, you also had to buy the artist with it.

"Then, can we ask the artist? If everyone puts in a little, we should be able to get one or two shells, right?"

"Those guys are totally booked for the summer. I've already inquired."

"Hmm. On top of that, they won't come for one or two shells, normally."

"And then, to launch fireworks, you need permission from the fire department and police department. Do you think we can get that?"

"It might be possible if we ask Inoue's dad?"

Great Inoue-kun.

"I can mention it... But don't expect too much. Aren't the public offices closed anyways?"

"The police are open right? Maybe we can ask Chuzai to help us."

"But if we don't have an artist, none of that matters..."

We held our heads. We were up against the wall with this problem.

"I thought a lot about it and contacted a lot of places. Even then, the conclusion was..."

The conclusion was,

"We had to steal it and launch it ourselves."

"..."

"For successive launch ones like starmines, they have extras in case of misfires. We need to borrow these."


"Either way, it's larceny."

"It's ok. Like they say: even Prometheus stole fireworks from the gods."

Prometheus stole fire...

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"Bokuchu" Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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"What wouldn't be a crime?"

All of the sudden from behind us was a throaty voice.

"Eh!?"

Whoa! Ch-ch-ch-ch-chuzai!

"Why are you so startled?"

It was more of an impossibility to say not to.

"W-we. We weren't..."

"We weren't discussing anything bad!"

Takaaki... It's almost as if you're saying we were totally discussing bad things that way.

"Hmm? You guys are suspicious..."

Our suspicion meant that he hadn't heard our conversation. But everyone was so startled that they seemingly couldn't make that kind of judgment. To have a policeman in a discussion on stealing. There wasn't a worse combination.

"Wwwwww, www-ww-ww, we weren't doing anything!"

Stuttering away.

"No... I heard steal or something?"

As one would expect from a police officer, he was sensitive to these kinds of words.

"T-that's not right. We were saying we want to eat some veal. Right?"

"R-right, right. That's right. We were all just discussing eating some steal!"

Hey hey. They're getting mixing up.

"And larceny...?"

"It-it's like a set with the veal. A veal and brownie set! It's surprisingly good."

"T-t-t-that's right. Summertime is the best time for the wheel and arsenic set... I-it's surprisingly good. Really." Saijoh. You stop talking already.

"No. Since you guys are together, it's no mistake that you guys are discussing something bad."

Brownie

"W-what are you saying to virtuous high schoolers...?"

"Ha ha. If you guys are virtuous, then **Shocker is a charitable institution.**"

Chuzai-san laughed through his nose. Nevertheless, it was the first time I had heard "Shocker" from the mouth of a policeman.

"E-enough about us, what are you doing here, Mr. policeman?"

"Y-yeah yeah. Isn't this out of your jurisdiction? Hurry back and go protect the safety of our town."

Why did that sound like a line out of "Tanken Boku no Machi"^{*1}?

"I'm off-duty till evening today. See, because Minako-chan is going back to Tokyo soon, she said she wanted to say her farewells to Saijoh before that. I just brought her here."

"What? Minako-san?"

"I have her waiting in the hospital lobby right now. When I inquired to your room, they said that you were in the inner courtyard."

"And then. I ran into this conspiring suspicious scene, is what happened. Why are you guys together? Every one of you."

"What? Like I said... w-we were just about to do [radio exercises](#)... Hey, everyone ready?"

"Y-yeah. Ready anytime! Give us a stamp"^{*2}!"

"I still think number one is a little cooler than number two. Number one, it's all about number one when it comes to radio exercises."

"What a lie! At any rate, there were this many of you crawling around. It's pretty amazing seeing you guys in the light. Well, as they say, for every one Saijoh you see, there are thirty times more. Wa ha ha."

Treated like cockroaches... I think the reason for our war with Chuzai-san not being able to end had its root around here.

"By the way, Mr. policeman."

Takaaki-kun asked.

"Where are you supposed to turn in petitions for fireworks?"

"Fireworks? You don't need a petition for stuff like your fountains."

"No, I meant like in the case of bigger fireworks."

"Hm. You're supposed to address it to the head of the jurisdiction, but why?"

"U-u-u-um, it's summer homework. It's called "Our Town and Fireworks"."

What's with... that title...

"What a low level high school."

We were being dissed.

"A-and, can you fill out a petition and send it in even during break?"

"Hm. You can send a petition even during break. And you need a meeting notification if you're meeting... but the most important for fireworks is probably the fire department... but why do you ask?"

"L-like I said, it's summer homework! It's called "Our Town and Petitions"."

Hey, hey. The title's changed!

"Even then. You can turn in a petition, but getting permission is a different story. It probably won't happen during the break."

As we thought.

"Even before that, you guys are minors. I'm not sure what you're trying to do, but they won't accept most of your petitions."

What Saijoh-kun had said was true. We sent signals to each other with our eyes.

That's right. It was the sign for "we have no other choice."

But first, we had to release ourselves from Chuzai-san's suspicions.

"M-Mr. policeman. You're not taking Obon off?"

"Well. We really can't take it off. There's a lot during the summer. There's more crimes and accidents too..."

"Is that so?"

"On top of that, there's more events. Like the fireworks festival in Y-City the day after tomorrow..."

"Hwva!?"

"What are you so surprised about?"

"Are you going... to the fireworks festival?"

"Of course. The majority of police around here are going. After all, it's a big event where tens of thousands of people come."

"Ah! Let me say one thing, you guys don't come. You'll increase my workload."

Who were we, to be told "not to come" by the police...


Either way, it ended up that we asked a crucial question to our "mortal enemy." I had a really bad feeling about this.

*1 An educational TV program that was aired from 1984 to 1991 for third grade social study class.

*2 During summer vacation, kids from the neighborhood get together and do the radio exercise together. With every attendance, kids get a stamp, at the end of summer vacation, they can receive some reward according to the number of stamps they received.

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It was Minako-san that saved us from this "state of emergency." It might have been that she couldn't wait for Chuzai-san, but she came out to the inner courtyard.

"Mi-Minako-san, good afternoon!"

Things were different from Chuzai-san's time starting with the greeting. Well, we hadn't even greeted Chuzai-san.

"Good afternoon everyone. You're all here?"

"Yeah. T-today we're all eating a wheel and arsenic set and doing radio exercise number 1 and that was when Chuzai came here so everyone panicked and we were asking about petitions for fireworks."

"?"

Like I said, Saijoh... don't speak if you're agitated...

"Are you leaving already?"

Great Inoue-kun. Even though he was prepared, couldn't hide his discouragement.

"Yes. On the 15th..."

"15th..."

"Thank you for everything, all of you. I don't have the right words to thank you."

"No. We should be the ones."

A slightly stuffy breeze blew by.

"Um..."

Inoue-kun.

"Can I send you off when it's time for you to leave?"

"Yes. Of course. That'll make me happy."

Great Inoue-kun. His once in a lifetime first love was ending. We couldn't say a word, and all we could do was hold our breath and watch over him.

"Um... one more thing..."

"What is it, Inoue-kun?"

"N-nothing..."

I have no way of knowing what Great Inoue-kun tried to say at this time. Of course, I still don't know. It was probably something he had decided in his mind, that he tried to talk about.

After a while, Minako-san was led away by Chuzai-san and was no longer with us.

"Inoue..."

Takaaki-kun put his hand gently on Great Inoue-kun's shoulder.

"... Give me Yuko-chan's bear..."

Y-you weren't going to comfort him!?

To jab into people's sentiment, **he's a demon, his guy!**

Did he want it that bad?

"Takaaki..."

"Hm?"

"You drank pool water, didn't you?"

"Yes... I received some."

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We got back to our meeting now that Chuzai-san was gone.
Saijoh-kun said.

"All right. As you heard, this is a crime. That's why..."

"As of today, we're breaking up this group!"

"What!? Our Miracle Rangers!?"
It was Jaime who shouted that.

"?" "?" "?"
"?" "?" "?"
"?" "?" "?"

"Jaime... what is this Miracle Rangers?"

"Eh? Well, I thought **it would be better if we were going to break up that we have a cool group name...** "

"No, no... that name stinks really badly."

"What? Really? I thought it was cool."

"No... if we had that name, I wouldn't have ever been here."

"Yeah. I wouldn't have been friends."

"Yeah. I wouldn't want to be involved with that group."

"I understand, Senpai. Then... What!? Our Jaime & His Friends!?"

"Why does it become that, idiot!"

"What? No good? Hm. It can't be helped. Then, What!? Our Jaime & All Stars!?"

"I'm not talking about the second half! Why are you the leading character!?"

"... I went through the trouble of making you guys all stars..."

"Who asked you to? When did we ask you to? Huh?"

We were once again arguing over something trivial. It had already developed into a skirmish.

Saijoh-kun.

"Either way. If the school finds out about this, it might not stop at a suspension, right? That's why I think it's better to do it with a couple volunteers. We'll cut the bond with the rest of the members. They don't know anything."

"That's true... We might even be arrested..."

Things were suddenly serious.

"So that's why. As of this time, we're breaking up our Saijoh & Retainers!"

"Like we said, when did we become your retainers!?"

"You never learn!"

"On top of that, that's the lamest so far! That name!"

"See. That's why you guys should have just gone with Jaime & All Stars..."

"No wayyyy!!!!!"

"Ahh. My head hurts. How were we able to work with these members?"

That's because. We're all around at the same level.

"By the way. Our group isn't built well enough to fundamentally break up."

"Yeah. We're just together when we pull pranks. Our numbers are still random, too."

"That's right. There's more of us when we do things that involve Yuko-chan or other girls."

True.

Even then, Saijoh-kun's argument was sound.

After all it was larceny. There was a certain amount of resolve needed if we were caught. It was totally different from the many pranks we had done before.

"That's why, Inoue and Chiba, you guys leave."

"What? I don't really mind."

Great Inoue-kun said.

"No. We have no way of knowing if this will impact your dad's business... you don't want to make trivial gossip topics."

"..."

"Chiba, too. Your brother is a police officer. It's no joke for the little brother of a police officer to be a thief."

"Yeah. Well, that's true, but..."

"Also... all you freshmen can leave, too. It's pretty harsh right after you started school."

"Also, those who want to leave should leave. We'll execute with the remaining members."

Everyone was silent.

Finally.

"Sorry. I'm going to leave this time. Expulsion is seriously no joke..."

"Me, too... I'm sorry about Mika-chan, but... There's no way I can wager my life that much."

Murayama-kun also,

"Sorry. I have more suspensions than Saijoh. There's only expulsion next time... I can't do it this time..."

That's right. It might seem unexpected, but Murayama-kun had received one more suspension than Saijoh-kun.

"It's ok. Murayama... Sorry for asking the impossible."

Thus, one left and then another; there were only four people left.

One was me. Another one was Takaaki-kun.

And Jaime and a new character, Morita-kun.

Morita-kun was a precious academic type in our group and was the only one who wore glasses. His appearance, fitness level and grades were all good (although he was below Great Inoue-kun). He was also very good with his hands, and was a very useful behind the scenes guy.

"Jaime, I said freshmen can leave, didn't I?"

"Hmm. It's ok. I'm totally fine even if I'm expelled."

That's was right. Jaime was the only child of a fairly successful barbershop and was already decided as the successor. Simply put, whether or not he graduated high school, his place of employment was secure.

"Also without me, it wouldn't be Jaime & So On!"

Why have we gone from "All Stars," to "Others!"

"You ok, Morita?"

"Yeah. I'm one of the rare members who hasn't been suspended in this group. I think I'd be better off than everyone else next time. That and..."

"And?"

"Mika-chan's the first kid who's ever been that affectionate with me. I piggy-backed a kid for the first time."

"I see. Thank you. Morita."

"Then, let's go with these members. The rest of you don't know anything. Is that ok?"

"Yeah... I feel bad... Saijoh. Sorry."

The members that had left started apologizing.

"It's not something you need to apologize about. It is, after all, theft..."

Takaaki-kun said suddenly.

"You guys. I'm not responsible if Mika-chan is beautiful when she grows up. She's got a fair amount of potential. Even more than Yuko-chan. That girl."

"What!?"

"Kouno and Kubo remained."

"Kouno and Kubo are looking over as if they want to join."

"What do you do?"

"Let them join (A)"

Chari rari rari

"Kouno and Kubo joyfully got into the wagon."

"Bokuchu" Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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This is how on top of Takaaki-kun, Jaime, and the new character Morita-kun, we further added new characters Kouno-kun and Kubo-kun and became a 6 member "larceny" execution unit.

For this incident, since our member composition suddenly changes, to better understand the new characters, we'll put them in order,

Stupidity

Inoue =< Morita < Murayama <<< Chiba =< Kubo = Kouno << Takaaki << Saijoh

Out of question: Jaime

Lack of common sense

Murayama =< Inoue < Morita << Chiba < Kouno < < Kubo << Takaaki << Saijoh

Out of question: Jaime

Perversion

Inoue =< Murayama < Jaime < Morita < Chiba < Kubo = Kouno <<< Takaaki =< Saijoh

Violence

Jaime < Morita <= Inoue << Saijoh < Murayama < Kouno < Chiba < Kubo <<< Takaaki

Let's see. It may seem unusual when you look at this chart and see Saijoh-kun who has taken the triple crown of "stupidity," "lack of common sense," and "perversion" to be ranked low for violence, but Saijoh-kun was just abnormally strong at fighting, but wasn't always violent. It can even be said that he didn't like violence and was always being hit by everyone.

In contrast to this, Kubo-kun and Kouno-kun are shining in all areas (in a bad meaning), and even though in terms of being uncontrollable, Kubo-kun was leading, they were good rivals, and a good pair, almost indistinguishable from each other.

These epoch-making scraped together members ended up being the execution unit. Will our "larceny" go well with these guys?

The day of action was the day of the fireworks festival in Y-city, in short, two days away on the 14th. We didn't have time.

So after we sent back the majority of the impractical group, we started our strategy meeting.

"The problem is how we're going to steal that spherical shaped object, right."

Then Saijoh-kun.

"No no, the biggest problem is the launching powder."

"Why? It's just powder right?"

"No. At any rate, it's supposedly incredibly flammable. It's not an exaggeration to call it powdered nitro-glycerin."

"What did you say?"

There was a dark cloud floating over us from the start.

"I was told during my part-time job to be careful because it'll easily blow up."

"....."

"It seems... It'll cause a big explosion with even a little static electricity."

Kubo-kun.

"Uhhmm. I may all of the sudden have a scheduling conflict that day."

Kouno-kun.

"I... still gotta do my book report, so can I pass on this after all?"

Hazardous materials on top of potentially being caught for larceny... It caused all of us to hesitate.

But at this time, Morita-kun said.

"No matter how flammable it is, they can bring it to the fireworks festival. It means that there must be some kind of method for transport, right?"

Ah, we were saved by Morita-kun being there. As I was thinking about what to do with these bunch of idiots, this sound argument. How splendid!

And the "method of stealing" that we thought up was a decidedly extraordinary one.

Our plan was that as we were drawing the attention of the firework artist under the guise of an interview, Jaime would steal the shells. We decided that because the shells were round, it was impossible to grab and steal them, so we would make Jaime dress like a girl and put two shells inside of a brassiere.

It was truly a good idea. Or it can be said that it sounded really funny. Because our expulsions were riding on this, it had to be this fun.

But, Jaime who would have to carry two fireworks in his chest, said

"What? What's going to happen if they just explode there?"

"Rejoice! You'll be the top news story in the nation the next day for sure!"

Hmm. Even if they didn't explode, if we're caught, I have a feeling that we'll be at the top of the news.

"We're counting on you. You're the only one that can do this!"

"Hmmm. Then is Jaime and His Friends ok for our group name this time?"

"Whaaaat!?"

"That's..."

"A different story..."

We hesitated. It was after all, Kubo-kun who reacted the most to Jaime's previous announcements.

"It's ok if... we don't have a group name."

"No, senpai. Unity is essential this time! That's why a group name is necessary."

"Even then... huh. Jaime & His Friends... is."

"Then. I won't do it."

"I, I understand! We'll go with that group name!"

"It seems like you don't really want to... I'm ok with it if you don't want to."

"N-no. It's not like that! It's really good! Everyone! We got such a wonderful group name."

"Right, right. I was just thinking that I wanted a good group name for our unit this time."

"Yeah. Our unity seems solid."

"Y-yeah! That's right. Viva! Jaime & His Friends!"

"Is that the truth? Senpai?"

"Yeah, yeah! True, true."

Crap. This idiot was pushing things too far...

"Then. As a way to solidify our unity, let's do a cheer!"

"C-ch-ee-r??"

"Ok, Senpai. I'll say "Jaime &!" and you'll all say "So On!" afterwards, ok?"

Wait. Like I said, it's become "others" again...

"We'll repeat that three times and close it up with a **"Fight Oh!"** finish. Got it?"

"Whva!?" Here?"

This was still the hospital inner courtyard. We were visible from a variety of hallways and hospital rooms. There was no way that we could Fight Oh! at a place like this.

But.

"Jaime—— Aaand?"

He started it on his own.

"....."

"Huh? Senpai? I ask you to say "So On! So On!" properly. After all, my life is on the line, right?"

"Yes... we'll do it... we'll do it..."

"Jaime—— Aaand?"

"So On! So On! So On!"

"Jaime——!"

"Fight!"

"Oh——!"

It was beyond the uproar of being embarrassed. It was the first time that I yelled "other" in public.

"That's good, senpai. Let's do this again at the fireworks festival location, two days from now!"

Craaap. I'm going to beat this guy to death after our plan is finished. Everyone's eyes were filled with a thirst for blood, although no one said anything.


"You guys! Quiet down! Where do you think you are!?"

The voice of the nurse assigned to Saijoh-kun.
She was quite right.

Jaimeeee aaand... "so long, so long, so long..."

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"Bokuchu" Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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The next day was Obon. In the countryside, there wasn't a harder day to take action.

Though, we only had this day to make our preparations, even if that was only to procure Jaime's girl clothes...

We used the drama club's "servant clothes" last time, so we were ok, but this time, we needed a "sailor suit." And the other thing was a brasserie.

Our hardships from last time's panties came back. (From [volume 4 "Find Some Panties"](#))

Furthermore, it was a brasserie. It was amazingly expensive! I guess valuable things are wrapped in expensive things after all. Because of it, "purchasing" had already disappeared from our method of procurement.

"I wonder what the weight of a fireworks shell is?"

"According to what Saijoh said, each one is about 1-2 kg. I thought that they're lighter."

"Well. They're made to fly. If they're too heavy, they won't fly, right?"

"I wonder if it's lighter than boobs..."

"Hm... I've never weighed them before, so..."

Of course. I've never heard of a male high schooler that had weighed some boobs.

"Boobs don't fly in the air, right?"

"Well... They don't fly, but... you don't fondle fireworks, do you?"

"Hmm. I've never fondled fireworks or boobs..."

"I want to fondle them..."

You guys are idiots, right?

"But see. You see, when you eavesdrop on the girls sometimes when they're talking. It's heavy enough to cause their shoulders to hurt."

"Mm-hmm."

"If their shoulders hurt, then I think it's beyond say 1 kg, or 2 kg."

"Yeah, yeah. That's sounds reasonable."

What "sounded reasonable," I didn't know. In this wide country of Japan, this was probably the only place ever that **seriously studied the weights of fireworks and boobs**. But for us, this difference in "weight of boobs and firework shells" was very important. Since we were putting them inside of a brasserie, the brasserie had to be able to contain the weight of the fireworks. Though, naturally our conversation had shifted more towards the boobs and in the end, we were talking about it's shape. **It's hard to be young.**

This is how after spending over 80% of our time on boobs, we determined after 2 hours that "a brasserie would be able to contain the weight of fireworks."

"Takaaki, you go borrow your sister's sailor suit. She's got ones she doesn't wear anymore, right?"

"What!? Again? Well. She's at her birthplace today so it's ok, but... If I'm caught, I'm going to tell her that you wanted

it again!"

"What!?"

"If I'm caught this time, we probably won't get off easy."

Hmm. It felt to me that it would be a bigger problem if we did get off easy .

"The problem is the brasserie again..."

"You can't see them anyway. Isn't it ok if they're someone's mom's?"

"N-O W-A-Y."

It was Jaime.

"Hmm. But I don't want to steal my mom's brasserie either."

"Me, either."

"Me, either."

I wonder why that is? What a mystery. Even though they were the only one (only two?) boobs we had massaged.

Kouno-kun.

"Should we just steal them? We're already stealing fireworks, so one or two; it's about the same."

That's totally criminal mentality, you.

"On top of that, don't underwear thieves carry a different stigma than other thieves?"

"Hmm. That's true."

"But if I'm going to steal my mom's, I'll go steal one from our classmates."

Perhaps this is how a future underwear thieves are born.

"Hm? Girl from our class?"

It seems as though Kubo-kun thought of something.

That was...

He said towards me.

"You go borrow some from Kazumi. Kazumi's an E-cup, too."

Kazumi-chan was a girl in the next class (Kubo's class to say it simply), and was a boyish girl that had gone to the same middle school that I did.

"D-don't be stupid!"

"Still. Kazumi likes you, right? You were troubled by it. If she doesn't like you anymore because of this, then you're lucky right?"

"I... I can't do that!"

It was in fact well known that Kazumi-chan had liked me for a long time. She wasn't a bad girl, but I already had a girl I liked at the time. No. It wasn't Yuko-chan.

But time passed and we weren't able to weave a plan together, and so it ended up that I was making a call to Kazumi-chan after all. Because she was boyish, it was true that talking to her about stuff like this was easier.

The small phone booth in the middle of the summer. It was a love-call made with a large gallery behind me.

"U-um... K-Kazumi?"

"Ah..."

Kazumi-chan's surprise was pretty great.

"W-what are you doing now?"

"Erm, getting ready to visit some graves with my grandmother. I-it's unusual that you're calling me. Something going on?"

"U-umm. This is hard to say, but..."

"What is it?"

But no matter what, the word "brasserie" wouldn't come out. It was debatable if confessing your love was this hard. The gallery was continually urging me on by poking.

"I have... something I want you to lend me, but..."

"What? What is it?"

"It, it's a ... br...br..."

"Black Jack volume 12, did you buy it?"

That's not right!

"What? What is that?"

"Sorry. That's not it. I'll say it. Your..."

"Mm-hmm?"

"Your... br, brasserie, can you lend it to me? It can be one that you don't use anymore..."

"Wha.....?"

Kazumi-chan had gone silent. Of course she was surprised.

The guy she had liked unrequitedly had just said, **"lend me your old used brasserie."** Was there ever a girl that had such a confession of love before? I was filled with the urge to hang up the phone right there and run away.

Kazumi-chan was silent for a while.

"... Ok."

"What?"

"It's ok. You need it, right?"

"Wh-... y-yeah."

"Should I bring it over?"

In contrast to my sinking, there were four guys dancing **mayim mayim** because they were overjoyed.

In reality, I was almost crushed by self-hatred. This was the first time I had ever felt this way before.

I met up with Kazumi-chan on a nearby levy. It was after all a brasserie. I didn't want to be seen by others.

Finally, Kazumi-chan came riding on her bicycle.

Kazumi-chan shyly handed me a paper bag.

"This one... was just washed."

"...T-thanks..."

"Hee hee... it took a little time to choose the pattern."

My chest hurt immensely.

"Sorry... for asking such a weird thing..."

"It's ok! You're going to use it for another prank, right?"

"What? N-no... Well, something like that..."

We had known each other for a long time. She truly knew me very well.

"I... even like your pranks, too. They're different from the one's other people do."

"..."

"I was happy. ... That you relied on me, even though it was something like this!"

"Kazumi..."

At this time, I was overtaken with the impulse to hold Kazumi-chan.

She felt so precious.

Precious... but... it ended up just staying in my mind.

Finally, Kazumi-chan, as if to hide her embarrassment, pedaled as hard as she could and left on her bicycle.

"Kazumi!"

"What is it?"

"T-thanks."

The sunset dyed Kazumi-chan as she waved her hand.

At that moment, Kazumi-chan, who I had totally thought of only as boyish, looked just a little pretty.

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“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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we're sorry for the downtime yesterday. our host had some problems, but now it's supposedly fixed. enjoy the next chapter! – Lynne

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“S-so this is Kazumi-senpai, huh!?”

No... That's not Kazumi.

“K-Kazumi-senpai!!!”

Jaime had gone off the deep end, while snuggling his cheeks up to the brasserie.

We had ended up meeting at Jaime's shop (barber shop).

“I'm sure you guys know this already, but if you say anything about this in class, I won't even forgive you guys.”
I warned everyone there about Kazumi-chan's brasserie.

“Yeah. We know.”

“We've never said anything before, have we?”

That was true. In terms of things like that, our group was united.

“Jaime, you understand too?”

“Ahh... Kazumi-senpai, right here...”

He wasn't listening. It might be better to say that he couldn't hear us.

“Over here is the left Kazumi-senpai, over here is the right Kazumi-senpai...”

I shouldn't have borrowed it...

Kubo-kun.

“You, too. You shouldn't be picky and just go with Kazumi. She's pretty popular in our class. I know it's not like she's gorgeous, but.”

“Yeah, yeah. She's an E-cup. That's four classes different from Yuko-chan's A-cup.”

Said Takaaki-kun from the same class. Please don't think about girls in cups.

“Ah! Kazumi-senpai's really popular among us, too.”

Jaime, representing the underclassmen.

“That Kazumi-senpai is right here... two of her...”

No, no, there's only one Kazumi. Why do you split her left and right when you think about her?

“It's not that she is or isn't gorgeous or anything like that...”

Affairs of love didn't always work out well. But it was true that I felt something in my chest for Kazumi-chan in the sunset.

We lined up the stuff we gathered, and confirmed our plan. Other than Jaime's girl outfit, we had a [densuke](#) (a

portable stereo recording deck made by Sony that took a generation by storm), mic, and other data collection tools. We borrowed all these from the electronics store from volume 3. Since that incident, electronics store owner's attitude towards us had greatly improved. (See volume 3)

This time we even had a wig from Jaime's shop so it was a lot more realistic than last time's "mysterious nationality unknown servant."

But... An unexpected mistake occurred here once again.

Jaime after finishing dressing for the final check:

"Senpai..., this skirt....."

"Is unusually long....."

"Ah....."

That's right. We had totally forgotten that Takaaki-kun's sister was a "delinquent girl leader."*1

A personnel selection mistake that followed the "leopard print panties." Ouchhhh.

"What!? It-it can't be helped! It's good because it hides your leg hairs!"

Hmm. The setting was supposed to be a "female member of the newspaper club," but... Even with compliments, he didn't look like that. He looked like a sly newspaper club member. It would be frightening for someone like this to come to an interview.

"Hmm. I like mini's better though."

It seems as though there was already a preference to Jaime's cross-dressing. It was a scary thing to get used to something.

Maybe most of you don't know about this, but the most troublesome thing when dressing like a girl are the hips, not the chest. If you make a guy dress like a girl, this part always becomes straight and can't draw out femininity. The secret to dressing like a girl is to increase the volume around the hips. For this, you can wrap a towel or something around the hips and create some hip curves. When you do this, you'll be surprised as to how different the bodies of men and women are from each other. Really. For all you guys that are considering this hobby in the future, please use this as a guide.

Even though the skirt was long, we finally completed **Bionic Jaime Number 2!**

Well. Pretty, at any rate!

Since we even had a wig this time, no matter what anyone said, he was a female high school student ... even though there was some delinquent girl leader mixed in.

Because of his beauty, the stimulated Takaaki-kun had pressed Jaime against the wall.

"Heh heh heh. Sister, stay calm. I'll make things good soon."

"Heeey, don't be willy-nilly~."

Do high school girls nowadays say things like "willy-nilly"?

"Takaaki... what are you doing?"

"What? It's because it would be bad if I sucked when I did this for real with someone like Yuko-chan, right? I thought I'd get used to it..."

You were planning on doing something like that to Yuko-chan who was still a 9th grader?

It was a blessing that Great Inoue-kun wasn't here.

"On top of that, that's your sister's, right?"

"Ah....."

How willy-nilly.


And the next morning.

The longest day of our summer was about to start.

*1 Delinquent girls back then were known for wearing very long skirts for their school uniforms.

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"Bokuchu" Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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The way I woke up that day can in no way be called positive. No. It wasn't because it was the day that I was to commit a crime, but because there was a cat sleeping on my tummy in the peak of summer...

Because we had the need to dress Jaime this time, we all met at my house first. The reason why it was my house was because there wasn't anywhere else that "wouldn't be unusual for a girl to visit." Even then, because there were a lot of relatives staying over at my house for Obon, it was a meeting with very little space.

Jaime's change of clothes was totally different from the "change of clothes" you might imagine. It could indeed be in the category of "remodeling," but we were already used to it. In an instant, Bionic Jaime Number 2 reappeared!

But

"T-the skirt's shorter!"

"It-it really is! He's become a normal high school girl."

"Ja-Jaime! What have you done...!?"

Takaaki-kun was holding his head.

That's right. Takaaki-kun had brought his sister's "long skirt of a delinquent girl leader." If it "had been cut," knowing that sister, there was no guarantee of living. Or it could be said that there would no longer be life.

"Ahh... my life..."

But Jaime.

"Ah. This? I borrowed it from my male cousin. He lent it to me easily when I told him that there was a costume contest at the festival."

"Costume contest?"

Argh... why didn't we think of that method before?

All of us:

"Ahh, I see."

But,

"Why didn't you tell us about this method to begin with!?"

Jaime was beaten up after all.

But compared to the delinquent girl leader Jaime from last night, how much prettier on the eyes was he? A bright white sailor suit and a skirt above the knees. And white high socks! High school girls have to be like this, absolutely. Nowadays loose socks are in, but it's got no chance of beating white high socks. Yes, yes.

"Heh heh heh. Sister, you have a nice ass."

Takaaki-kun was doing it again.

"Takaaki. Cut it out... already..."

"Hmm. I turn like this naturally."

Turns like this naturally... there's a fair amount of problems with that, you know?

But our preparations finished, we flew out of the house triumphantly.

My mother seeing that,

"Oh? There was a girl here too?"

"Ye-yeah."

I'm not bragging here but it wasn't unusual for a girl to visit my house. Well, Jaime wasn't a "girl," but...

Then my mom,

"Umm... was it Hitomi-chan? Please come again."

"!"

At this time, it hit me.

Every time when a girl would come over, my mom's "was it *-chan?" having a different girl's name every time always resulted in an argument, but I always thought that, it was "my mom's misunderstanding." But it was made clear because of Jaime. My mom was "doing it on purpose." Now that I think about it, it was odd that the names were precisely shifted by one. What kind of parent was she (in actuality, she continued doing this till I was married). Do you understand now? My love of pranks was in my blood. Blood.

We split up on motorcycles. Jaime was on the back of Takaaki-kun's CB.

"Let's go to the fireworks festival!"

As might be expected, at this point in time, we were all nervous. Excluding Jaime, that is. Jaime had already become a high school girl, riding tandem on a motorcycle, or maybe even a high school girl who was a little too excited and was continually making strange sounds like "Yahoo."

And then we arrived at the fireworks festival grounds.

At the location, the dry riverbed, the preparations for the fireworks festival had already started in the morning, just like Saijoh-kun had said.

"It's finally... the time."

"Yeah..."

GULP... I swallowed my saliva.

No. I think everyone was the same.

Words disappeared from the members.

Jaime said with an obviously nervous expression.

"O-oh. Senpai..."

"Hm? What?"

"I forgot something **really important**..."

"W-what did you say? Something else..."

Nervousness ran throughout everyone.

"Yeah, it's just... I was thinking..."

"Yeah."

"Can we change our group name?"

"Do what you want! His Friends, All Stars, or Others, whatever you want!"

"Ahh! You're thinking of it lightly, after all!"

"No, no. It's crucial! We're doing a cheer, right? So what's our group name!"

Everyone was in a despair.

"Yes. It's that. It's called, Jaime & Lupin the Thirds..."

Geh. Lame!

"Ahh. Ahh. What a good name. That's decided, then?"

"Hmm. But And So On is also hard to throw away..."

"Don't hesitate here! Idiot!"

"Senpai, which do you think would go better?"

"I have no idea!"

Because of it, the strings of our nervousness were ripped apart.

What? The Cheer? We did it...

Our group name? It was the one I want to write down the least...

In our possession was a diagram of last year's fireworks festival that Saijoh-kun had drawn for us. According to his explanation, during the preparations, the fireworks shells were kept far away from the moisture of the river and away from any grass or trees. Also to guard against sudden rain, it had some kind of cover, supposedly. After we checked from the bridge, we confirmed some boxes like that, placed just like he had said.

"Those are the shells."

"Then there's the launching powder..."

And

"Let's do it!"


"Ooh—!"

"Let's go! Jaime & Lupin the Thirds!"

"O, ooh-....."

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"Bokuchu" Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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Fireworks preparation is a fairly large-scale operation. Because of that, there were a fair number of people going every which way. We chose noontime because there would probably be the least number of people during our "time to carry out our plan."

At the time, things were different from now and noon breaks were set. In the countryside, there would be a siren or something else that signaled noon, and everyone rested based on that. It was a good time.

Scouting was important when committing crimes or pranks. Although we had never committed larceny, we had done a great deal of stuff that was close to it, so we knew well the importance of scouting.

"That's the leader."

"Yeah. No mistake. The one wearing red over there might be his apprentice."

"The guys from the shopping district are wearing [happi's](#). The plain clothes ones are probably part timers."

When scouting, you first synchronize what everyone recognizes by saying out loud on purpose places where things are, which person has what role and is doing what kind of work, and what the chain of command is. This "purposely saying" part is the important part. It won't go well if each individual comprehends things in their own way. For those who are thinking of founding a group of thieves, please use this as a guide.

"I see. It's exactly like Saijoh said. There's no way of knowing who's a part time worker."

"Can we mix in?"

Even though we were few in number, we were split up into two groups. No, it wasn't Jaime & Lupin the Thirds. It was the plain-clothes group and school uniforms group. The pair of Kouno-kun and Kubo-kun were the plain-clothes group. They were to act while mixing in with the part-timers. The school uniform group was outfitted to be school broadcasting club members and newspaper club members. They were to act under the guise of covering the event.

The first to act was the plain-clothes group of Kouno-kun and Kubo-kun.

"We were assigned to the parking lot, but were told to help out over here, what should we do?"

"Oh. That's helpful. Help out with the installation over there."

It was after all, the preparations for an event that drew tens of thousands of people. There was no differentiating who was who. They were easily able to succeed in mixing in with the part-timers.

"All right, let's move, too. That's probably the leader of the fireworks shop."

There was a middle-aged man roughly dressed raising his voice. We waited for his work to come down a notch and made our move.

"Excuse us."

"Huh? Me?"

"Yeah. Are you from the fireworks shop?"

"Yeah! I'm the pyrotechnician, whadaya students want?"

"What? Pyrotechnics?"

"Well. It's the same as a fireworks artist. And? What's your business?"

"Yeah. Actually we're from the school broadcasting club and newspaper club. We decided to cover the fireworks festival this time."

"Ooh! That's a good thing!"

There was a good feel to this guy.

"And. We were going to record and play actual fireworks footage, but we also wanted to add an interview with the fi-
... er... pyrotechnician, is what we were thinking..."

"Really."

"And so it would help us out greatly if you could teach us stuff about fireworks. We won't take much time, so..."

"Really! Y'all are commendable fer some younguns! It's my privilege. No problem! Brother! Ask me anything!"
It was a good start. Aside from that, this guy's got momentum.

"Hmm. Master, you're very efficient."

"Of course! I'm an Edo kid *1If the pyrotechnician's slow, the fireworks won't go up!"

"So that means you're originally from Tokyo?"

"Hm. I'm originally from the Miyagi prefecture."

No... you don't call that an Edo kid... What is this guy declaring? It seems as though this guy thinks that if you live in the Tokyo prefecture, you become an Edo kid.

"F-first, can we take your picture, master?"

"What? Picture?"

He glanced at Jaime as he said that.

"Sure! If it's with this girl!"

What!? I-is this guy the "same type as Saijoh," too?

"Girlie, what's yer name?"

"U-u-um... Ja-Jami-ko..."

Idiot! What are you, an used Isuzu car?

"No. Um, I'm Kazumi. Pleased to meet you."

Direct from the brassiere, huh...

Nevertheless, Jaime's tone of voice was superb. You could only think of him as a girl. No wonder Takaaki-kun was stimulated...

"Yer pretty, girlie. Yeah. Take a picture with me!"

"My! Master! That makes me happy!"

Jaime, who was in high spirits, and a middle-aged man who was overdoing it. It looked like some cheap cabaret somewhere.

A picture with just him and Jaime. He even made a V-sign. This guy would probably be startled if he found out that Jaime was a guy.

"At any rate, girlie!"

"Yes?"

"Yer tits are huge."

He was the same type as Saijoh, after all... "tits"...

Of course they were. They were stuffed with the number 5 shot (15 cm diameter) in mind.

"All right, we're going to start recording now. Are you ready, Master?"

I started to press the switch of the Densuke.

"What? Y-er going to record?"

"Yes. Of course. We're broadcasting at the school."

People at the time, especially older people, weren't used to mics or being recorded. Most people were fairly nervous when a mic was held up towards them.

"Hmm. I'm alright with the recordin', but that "master" ain't no good. I ain't used to being called that."

"Is that so? Then what shall we call you?"

"Hmm, lemme think..."

He was in thought for a while. I don't think it mattered much what it was, though.


"President?"

Who do you think you are!?

*1 Edo kid=People born in the Tokyo area. They are known for acting quickly. Tokyo was called Edo until the Meiji Era.

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"S, so it's... president?"

Is this guy [Desler](#)?

"Yeah! Well, everyone calls me that."

Don't lie!

"I-is that so? Then "president," it is..."

I acted as if it I understood.

"Boss. Are the breakable items ok over here?"

The apprentice asked him.

"Umm... he just said "boss"..."

"Yeah. They "presidently call me that"... Not!"

No! By any chance, **is that all he wanted to say?**

"Hey, were you recordin' that? Were you recordin' that?"

No way!

What was up with this guy...?

Who asked him to tell a pun?

But,

"Ah ha haa."

We gave him a courtesy laugh. In any case, our plan was over if his mood was ruined. We would laugh at anything, even if it was "Why did the chicken cross the road."

But. He misunderstood that as a "big hit." He got into a really good mood and said

"Yeah! Follow me. I'll show ya the tricks to launchin' fireworks!"

Yay! But it was like showing the way to some thieves (well, it actually was just that). Our chests hurt just a little.

"These here are the tubes for consecutive launchin'. These already have a fuse set on the bottom."

"Whoa."

"So, ya stuff the ones with the launchin' powder already attached in these."

"What!? There's ones with launching powder already attached!?"

This was a important topic. At any rate, this was good news for us because we were worried about "how to steal" launching powder.

"Yeah. Normally it's called a single shell. We set the powder every time, but there's a limit on speed with that."

"Mm-hmm."

"And. These here are the shells with the powder already attached."

Sure enough on those shells, there was something sticking out at the bottom of the shell. I See. These ones.

Nowadays, fireworks are all lit by electronic fuses, but that was from the 1980s. Before that, the artist lit all of them. Therefore, methods like this were used for "fast shooting." This method is, of course, still presently used.

But we were more worried about whether or not these "shells with the powder already attached" would fit into Jaime's brasserie, than the boss' explanation.

"If we put it sideways, it might fit..."

Jaime inadvertently said out loud.

"Ah? What would?"

"What? Oh, no. In the tube. Tube. Do you ever put them in sideways?"

"Ahh. The shells are, you see. We hang 'em and put 'em in. We don't do things like that."

"I see."

"Are there ever misfires?"

That's right. This was an important question.

"Mmm? Nope. I ain't no amateur."

Oh no! It was different from what Saijoh said! We were troubled because we were planning on borrowing the extras for misfires.

"But, sometimes they do jam in the tubes. 'Cause of that, we hafta prepare some extras. Either way, them big festivals are like being on tour. Most guys carry extra shells."

The boss, true to his name, gave us an extremely clear explanation about fireworks. It was truly interesting, so much that we were intently listening, almost forgetting our original objective.

At that time, we received a sign from Kubo-kun who was mixed in with the part-timers. He made the "ok" sign by making a large circle with his arms. What was ok? It meant he stole some launching powder.

Now. All that was left was our shells.

After receiving Kubo-kun's sign, I whispered to Jaime.

"The shells without the powder."

"Roger, sir."

"Boss. I want to ask you a little about your personal story..."

"Yeah! I don't mind!"

This was the biggest mistake of the day.

Originally our plan was for Jaime to put the shells in his brasserie during this interview.

"Excuse us. Can we go take pictures of the fireworks shells while you're doing that?"

Takaaki-kun.

"Ooh. I don't mind. But don't use the flash."

"Ok."

Well. It was already the age of the strobe, but he was probably naturally sensitive to anything flammable.

Takaaki-kun and Jaime headed over to photograph the shells. Kubo-kun and Kouno-kun also started working to keep them from being seen by other people.

But.....

"Boss, why did you enter this world?"

Morita-kun pointed the mic at him.

"Ahh, the world of pyrotechnics? Lemme see. That was **one year after the war.**"

What? We're going back to 1946?

"Hmm. Back then, most towns were burnt out..."

"Yes."

"(ommission)... and, well, we didn't have the luxury of picking our occupation. And so..."

"You became a fireworks artist?"

"Nope. I went to work at a grocery store."

Huh?

It had already taken us ten minutes to get to this point. Even then **"grocery store"**... it was too much.

"But ya see. This grocery store owner was a terrible person and..."

"Yes."

"(ommission)... and, I left that store as if skippin' out by night..."

The boss said while gazing away.

"Huh. And then you got into fireworks?"

"Nope. Next was the rice dealer..."

Geh geh. 20 minutes had already passed. Was the boss planning to tell us about his whole life?

The boss' story went on and on, and he worked at the rice dealer, worked at a lacquer shop, became unemployed, was reemployed at a coal mine... it was already a history book.

"(ommission)... and, I went to work for a **fireworks shop** in Osaka."

What a relief... He's finally working in a fireworks shop... I'm happy... so much.

... Wait, what? ... Osaka? This guy said he was an Edo kid..... Geh. There's still a ways to go!

"(ommission)... and... the crown prince and Michiko-sama were married and..."

It had already become a history of Japan. On top of that, it was only 1958...

"(ommission)... but then, as a last resort, I took over the **family fireworks business.**"

It was a family business! Then what was that all about from the grocery store!?

The 60 minute tape we had put into the densuke (30 minutes each side) had already filled up and been flipped over.

But because of it, Jaime had gotten a lot of time and his chest was filled to a round shape. In other words, he had **put the fireworks shells in them!**

Jaime also gave the OK sign.

But the boss' story continued.

"(ommission)... and then, there's the expo in Osaka, right?"

What a relief... It's the 1970s... Hurray for the 70s! Viva! Expo 70!

But...

"Then... There was fireworks at the expo, but..."

"What? Did you shoot some in it, boss?"

"Nope. Actually. It was the boss I learned from's first apprentice's business partner's..."

Who's that!?

It went on and on. It just kept going!

"(ommission)... and then... at that year's grand fireworks competition..."

"You were the winner?"

"Nope... **The first year was no good...**"

Don't say anything if you didn't win! Did he just say the first year? Is he going back again? Even though we had finally gotten to Expo 70?

"(ommission) and the next year... at the grand..."

"... did you ... win?"

"Nope..."

"(ommission)... and then. That year, I met my wife and married her. **She was an amazingly good woman, but...**"
The boss again gazed away, tears were welling up in his eyes.

"... Did she pass away...?"

"What? She's alive. She's my current wife."

You! I'll kill you!

Is probably what Takaaki-kun would have said. Well, I'm not short tempered like he is, so I took it, but the noon break was already over.

"My wife was born in a place called Kure in Hiroshima, but her family was..."

Oh no! His family's history was about to start now.

"No, no. Boss. I would like to listen, but since we don't have enough tape, we'll hear your wife's story next time..."


And. At this time, the boss came back to himself.

"Oh! It is! Oh no, oh no. I used up a lotta time because of you guys!"

I-I'll kill you!

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"Thank you very much for all your help today."
Even then we thanked him thoroughly.

"Ooh! Me, too! I kind of had fun!"
If you speak that much about your life, of course it'll be fun...

"And this..."
We handed the boss an envelope. There was 4000 yen cash in it.

"W-what? Schools nowadays pay an interview fee? Wow! How times have changed."

"Yes. Well, it's kind of like that. And, can you sign here on this receipt?"

"Nope. I can't take this. You guys, **build a house or something with this!**"
That's impossible.

"No, we'll be in trouble if you don't accept this. Please."

"Is that so? Well, if you say so... maybe I'll buy a house or something..."

The boss unwillingly accepted the envelope and wrote his name on the receipt. Without having to say, this was actually the "payment for the fireworks."

"Oh?"

Apparently, the boss looked at Jaime and noticed something.

Oh, no!

"Girlie, have your tits gotten smaller?"
H-how sharp! He's no ordinary pervert.

Jaime.
"No. Boss, there's no way that can be."

It actually was like that though. We had stuffed with number 5 shots in mind, but weren't able to get one, and had stolen number 4 shots (approximately 12 cm). The radius was 3 cm shorter than before.

"Really? Well, they're still nice and round tits. Eh? Girlie."

"Boss! You're such a pervert."

"Yeah! It's as if they're number 4 shots! Ha ha ha. Makes me want to launch them!"

T-too sharp!

The best thing to do was to leave.

"All right, boss. Thank you very much."

"Ah! Wait, brother."

"What...?"

Startled.

"Take these."

The boss had his apprentice bring something over and then handed it to us.

"These are sparklers made with left-over powder. I usually give them to the staff. They're different from the ones you can normally buy!"

They looked like straw with powder on them, weird shaped sparklers.

"T-Thank you very much..."

"Well then! Look forward to tonight."

To that, even our chests hurt. What a good person he was, even though his stories were long.

We finally met up with Kubo-kun's group. For the time being, we celebrated that we "succeeded without getting caught."

"All that's left is launching."

"Yeah..."

"Will the receipt that we got at the end be useful for something?"

"Maybe... We at least have proof that we paid. It might come in handy if something happens. Although it's only a consolation."

"Hmmm."

"In any case they're fireworks, right? We're launching the proof of what we stole. There's still a good chance we'll get caught."

"Hmmm... Saijoh made an outrageous promise for us."

"Well. But if I were Saijoh, I probably would have accepted, too..."

"Yeah. Me too, most likely..."

Even though we had succeeded in stealing, we weren't in a good mood. It was the first "prank" we felt so mixed about.

"Oh... speaking of which."

It was Kouno-kun.

"There was someone who resembled Chuzai."

"What? That Chuzai from our town?"

"Yeah. When we say Chuzai, that's the only one."

"Ah... that's true. He did say he was coming here today."

"Let's get out of here now!"

We put all of the fireworks on my Yamaha Mate and I rode in the back on the way back. It was so that on the off chance that I fell, my friends wouldn't take damage.

For now, we were headed for the City Hospital so we could report to Saijoh.

We were again meeting in the inner courtyard.

"I, I see! You successfully stole them."

Saijoh-kun was filled with emotion.

"Yeah. We had trouble, but we have 2 shots."
Even though the only trouble was the boss' story.

"Incredible, you guys. Now we can show Ryo fireworks. Thanks, thank-..."

"Don't cry. You an idiot?"

Saijoh-kun cried like a child while saying that. It was another weird story for a guy who didn't cry when he received injuries that would take 3 weeks to heal, to be crying at a time like this.

"Ao... hic... I... really am blessed with good retainers... hic."

"Like I said, when did we become your retainers!?"

"Really, taking advantage of the turmoil."

We decided to go visit Ryo-kun's hospital room right then. It was so we could find out what Ryo-kun could see from his window. We would choose that place to launch the fireworks today.

When we entered the lobby, Mika-chan came over.

**"Saijoe-!
... and retainers."**

Retainers... Again... After being called that so many times, we almost started believing it ourselves.

"Saijoe-, are the fireworks going up today?"

"Yeah. They're going up! Big ones! Look forward to them!"

"Ok! Good job Saijoe-!"

"No, no. This time, these retainers are shooting them up."

"Thanks, Retainer Number 1, Number 6 and Number 17 and Number 18! "

Accurate enough to make me angry. Even though we had only gone to the swimming pool together once.

"And... huh?"

She was surprised after seeing Jaime. That's right. The bionic Jaime wasn't in her retainer list.

Mika-chan, after thinking for a while.

"Is this person Saijoe- lover?"

!

We all cracked up.

Jaime, deciding to have some fun.

"But... it hasn't come yet this month..."

S-stupid bastard! Don't make such a stupid joke in front of a 6 year old! You'll never have it your whole life!

"What won't come???"

Mika-chan, full of questions.

"What? Umm....."

See!

"You'll understand too, someday."

Jaime winked.

Why are you trying to wrap it up neatly!?

It's a dirty joke, too!

But, Mika-chan.

"Hasn't come; you mean aunty?"

What!!!?

We were afraid to ask if Mika-chan actually knew it or not.

"L-let me see... Aunty... hasn't come... I wonder what happened?"

To that, Mika-chan.

"I know! Aunty is at sister-Yuko-chan's place! For sure!"

What!?

W-was she saying this knowingly? No... even if girls are generally precocious, it can't be...

"L-let me see. ... Maybe I should ask sister-Yuko-chan..."

"The aunty hasn't come to sister-Yuko-chan's place, either?"


"N, no. I think aunty definitely goes to sister-Yuko-chan's place. Definitely... every month... B-but I'm not sure about today..."

"Therefore, Retainer Number 1, you go ask on the phone."

No way I'm asking that! Idiot.

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Ryo-kun's hospital room was in the children's ward, in the same section as Saijoh-kun's but on a higher floor. I had never met with a "seriously ill" child like that before. To tell you the truth, I couldn't help but be depressed.

"Ryo-ku~n. I brought Saijoe!"

"Retainers, too."

Hmm. Was there any way to give this 6 year-old a realization of the word "friend?"

"Saijoe!!"

There was a boy lying in a bed there. He also seemed really happy that "Saijoe" had visited.

The nurse who appeared to be attending him was sitting next to him and,

"Oh? Saijoh-kun, you came again?"

Mika-chan answered first.

"That's right! Today, he's with his retainers, too!"

We greeted them. The thought crossed our minds that it was our fault for greeting them even though we had been introduced as retainers. The nurse was a different person from the one assigned to Saijoh-kun and was in her late 30s. She already had the feel of a veteran.

She stood up from the chair and returned our greeting with a very nice smile.

He was... Ryo-kun was definitely different from a healthy child, but he wasn't the "kid full of pipes" that I had imagined, and at least to us, he didn't look like a child whose "next month was doubtful." But it was true that I couldn't feel the aura from him that only children have.

Saijoh-kun had already gone to Ryo-kun's pillow-side and had started playing with some dolls there.

"These kids really like Saijoh-kun. He's been hospitalized here for a fairly long time, but he's the first person that these kids have become so attached to."

"Is that so? He does have some weird talent with kids."

"Yeah. Even though he's got no talent with girls."

"There's a special borderline at about age 12. Saijoh."

The nurse chuckled at this a little.

"Even to him, because he's not in elementary school yet, he only sees us workers, his mother, and Mika-chan, you see. It's a big help."

Hm?

There was something that bothered me a little at that time.

"Saijoh-kun plays with him a lot, tells stories that are nonsense, and is really nice."

"Stories that are nonsense?"

"Mm-hmm. Like the other time, he told a story about defeating a policeman with firecrackers. I laughed while listening nearby."

No no. That's actually a **true story**. Well. Normally people wouldn't believe it though. You've become a fairy-tale, Chuzai-san. Good for you.

Saijoh-kun said to us.

"You guys come over here, too."

"Ah, yeah. We're coming now."

The nurse, looking at her watch, gave us the warning of "only 20 minutes." Only 20 minutes... This time limit spoke about the condition of his illness.

We headed over towards Ryo-kun's bed and burned the view from his window in our minds. There weren't any tall buildings in the view. There was a river flowing beyond a couple rows of houses.

"Over there."

I said to Morita-kun.

"Yeah. The riverbed is wide over there. That would work."

The sky was like a rectangular canvas. That was Ryo-kun's sky.

"Um. Is it true that you're going to shoot the fireworks up?"

"Y-yeah, it's true. Tonight. Look out of your window, ok? At eight o'clock."

"Ok... They'll be the big fireworks, won't they?"

"Yeah. They're big."

"Like at a fireworks festival?"

"Yeah. They're just like those."

That is to say, we had stolen the ones from a fireworks festival.

"Can you see them from heaven?"

!

"Eh....."

It seemed like an unexpected question to Takaaki-kun and the others, but it definitely wasn't an unexpected remark to me. From the nurse's story we had just heard, the lack of a "father" had been bothering me.

Mika-chan then said.

"Mika and his daddy... is in heaven. He won't be able to see the fireworks if they're small, right?"

"We were supposed to go see them last year."

"Yup. But then I got into the hospital, right? So we couldn't see it."

For these kids, there was no bitterness in these words. For them, the distance between "this world" and "heaven" was only about the distance from this town to Tokyo, probably. But because they were being so carefree, it weighed heavily on us.

"Yeah. He'll see them. They're really big fireworks. He'll see them for sure."

"Yay!"

As soon as they had said that, a **Squid-Devil** suddenly attacked us. What? What do I mean by that? Saijoh-kun had attacked with an action figure. I think he didn't like the conversation to get any heavier.

"O-ouch. Hey, what are you doing!?"

"I'll play Squid-Devil, so you're Rider."

Saijoh-kun handed me the Rider action figure.

"Y-yeah. C'mon!"

"Fu fu fu. It's the end of you, Rider!"

"You're so impertinent even though you're seafood."

"Ha ha ha ha. Too bad, Rider. Did you forgot you were an insect? C'mon! You dung beetle relative!"

"What!? Let's do it. You sushi ingredient!"

Ahh... How lame.

"Bring it! Grasshopper!"

"C-crap! Grasshopper Jump! King kick!"

"Ha ha ha. You're an insect after all. You're even inferior to an arthropod. You're modified and all you do is punch and kick? Take this! Squid Ink Beam!"

"W-whoa. It's black but looks delicious! ... Fine then, secret weapon! Ultra Grasshopper Punch Suicchoon! *1"

"C-crap! I don't know what that was but it sounds like the switch is on!"

Since we did idiotic doll plays like this regularly (?), we were truly used to it. Ryo-kun and Mika-chan were joyfully laughing every time Rider was defeated. You couldn't tell who the hero was.

We played with them for the full 20 minutes until we were stopped by the nurse, and left the hospital room behind us.

There was heavy air around us. The first person to talk at times like these was always Takaaki-kun.

"Hmm. So that's how it is."

"Sorry. I didn't know, either."

Whether or not Saijoh-kun really didn't know, I still have no idea. According to the nurse's story afterwards, Mika-chan's father collapsed and died due to cancer when Ryo-kun was released from the hospital the first time. It's what you call Scirrhou. The father, as soon as he found out about his child's illness, had put in a large amount in insurance, and it was because of this insurance that they could pay for this current hospitalization. He left the kind of "love" that you hear about in insurance commercials. But even then, the amount of trouble and hardship on the mother was immeasurable.

"Working in this occupation, I always think that **there's no such thing as God.**"

The last words of the nurse stayed in my mind.

"Will you be able to launch?"

Saijoh-kun asked worriedly.

"Yeah, don't worry. We heard more than we had to from the boss."
Morita-kun answered.

"It's a pity that he taught thieves how to do it."

"Yeah. But we listened to his story even more than that."


"By the way, the nurse was listening about the fireworks, is that all right?"

"Well. She doesn't take me seriously, so. They don't trust my stories. Also, it's not like a story that they can report."
True.

The windows in the hallway were open. A slightly cool breeze blew in from there. When I looked up, there was Ryo-kun's sky that I had just seen, waiting quietly for the night.

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We were at the riverbank that we had seen from Ryo-kun's window. At this point, the group was split into two again: the grass cutting group and the materials procurement group. I was in the grass cutting group.

The materials procurement group finally arrived with the materials for the tube. What they had prepared was a 120mm-long chimney, enough rope, certain to make Saijoh-kun happy, and quick set cement. We were very happy that the metal works shop wasn't closed (because Obon was good for business).

We started with making the launching tube. We wrapped the tin plate chimney with many layers of straw rope. If you're wondering if something like this would take the pressure of the fireworks, during the Edo-era, they were originally made with bamboo or wood. Morita-kun was quite confident in this method. Once the tube was completed, we drove stakes in around it, wrapped it with even more rope and hardened the rope with the quick set cement. It would be a huge incident if it fell, so we secured it with a lot more stakes than the boss' tubes.

Lastly, we poured in quick set cement around and in the tube. This would set in about an hour and was the kind used around the southern part of Osaka to abandon corpses.

All right. The problem was the method of ignition. The pro's directly light it by placing live coals inside, but we didn't have that kind of courage. So what we thought up was a rain gutter. After finding an abandoned house nearby, we trespassed. Placing a crime on top of a crime, we stole the rain gutter. Yes, yes. I'm a criminal.

By the time we finished all of the preparations, the sun had totally set already.

"Just a little longer."

"My heart's beating hard, Senpai."

Just as everyone was nervous,

Kubo-kun started saying.

"Hm. Was there a bathroom around here?"

"There's no way there is. Go do it somewhere over there."

"Hm... but it's the large one..."

"L-large one?..."

"Study your English! Retard! ... Ugh, don't make me flex..."

Even if we didn't understand "large", we understood the situation from the "don't make me flex."

"Didn't I tell you earlier to use the bathroom?"

"Y-you see. I'm the type... to feel it... in my intestines when I get nervous."

He seemed like he was in pain already.

"What's that about during this important time? Can't you hold it?"

"B-but... **it's... already starting to say kon'nichiwa**^{*1}..."

"H-hello?"

"No. It's already night so it's kon'banwa^{*2}, **Senpai."**

"You be quiet! ... Ugh, I told you not to make me flex... Jaime, you stupid bastard..."

"There isn't one unless you go back to the city hospital."

"T-that's too... It already said "hello"... Now it's saying "how do you do"... So... I don't think I can stand the vibrations of a motorcycle..."

Kubo-kun even held his fingers in a circle and stuck a bent finger in it to show us a schematic of what, "how do you do", looked like.

"Don't make a schematic. Idiot."

"What should we do? Well, we can shoot the fireworks even without you. Go do it somewhere over there. It can't be helped."

"Hm... any of you guys... have paper?"

"I don't have any." "Me, either." "Me, either."

Maybe during the winter, but we didn't have any fashionable male highschoolers that carried stuff like that during the summer.

"Senpai. **I have the leopard print panties.**"

"Hvu!"

"No. That cost us 1200 Yen so it isn't something that we can use for this guy's business."

"Yeah, yeah. Why do you have it anyways?"

"Umm. I was thinking it would be useful if something happened. Just in case..."

Just in case, what kind of "**something**" was going to happen...

Kubo-kun also,

"Me too... to wipe with panties... is a little..."

"Senpai, you don't have that luxury."

No, no, it cost us 1200 yen. It's very luxurious.

"Wipe it with some leaves that are lying around. It's ok for your ass."

"H-how dare you just because it's someone else's ass... Ugh."

"W-what was that? That **ugh** just now? Was it the mambo?"

"Hurry and go. Before it turns into **how are you!**"

"D-damn, ... just because it's not happening to you... the next time you go number 2 at the school, I'll announce it to the school... ugh...!"

Kubo-kun disappeared into the thicket while leaving resentful comments. Truthfully, we hadn't even thought that this would be a huge impediment for us later.

We could hear the sounds of fireworks from very far away.

"Oh! We can hear the sounds of the fireworks festival in Y-City all the way over here."

"How true... It's a little brighter over there, see."

"The boss... must be working hard..."

"Yeah..."

We were able to confirm the hospital from the riverbed.

"Ryo-kun's probably around that window."

"Yeah. I hope he can see this."

"I hope that it shoots up, if anything."

It was almost the promised 8 o'clock.

"All right! Cut the fuse!"

Cut the fuse meant cutting off and opening up the end of the fuse of the fireworks shot so that it lit easier, and was the basis of the phrase "cut the fuse." Well, it was knowledge that we had just learned at noon from the boss.

"It's kind of like the circumcision operation."

"That's a bad example, you."

But every time we held the knife up to it and cut

"O, ouchhh."

"Stop saying something every time."

"Hm. For some reason or another."

"You're phimosis, right?"

"W-what—!?"

I don't think that this is something that women would understand, but for some reason this was the most humiliating word for male high schoolers. Yes, yes. A lot more than "poo head." For those of you who have boyfriends in high school, please try it out once. You'll be able to break up right there.

But, without having to say, it wasn't something we were going to argue about there.

Though, the circumcision surgery completed safely (?), we placed the rain gutter on the tube. Since we didn't have confidence in ourselves to place the coals in the tube directly, we thought of a method by in which we were going to roll a snake firework down the rain gutter and into the tube. The snake firework was a mysterious fireworks where the ashes would continually grow and got its name from the way it looks like a snake. Because the snake fireworks would blow fire out of its base for quite a long time after lit, it was truly a very convenient item for ignition.

And then, when we were finally ready to ignite,

"Hello ♪"

"How dare you guys try to launch when I'm not here ♪"?

Kubo-kun came trotting over refreshed like he was someone else. It seemed as though he finished his "how do you do."

"Ok, ok. Then, Kubo, you light it."

"What? Is it ok?"

Kubo-kun lit the snake firework with a 100 Yen lighter. The snake firework ignited nicely with a hiss.

"Ok! Raise the rain gutter!"

Roll roll roll roll...

The snake firework started to roll...

... and it continued inside the tube.

Just when I thought I heard a faint pst sound,

Zuhba——n

A tremendous sound rang out.

"Whoa——!"

"W-wow!"

Finally, while making a single path of light, the "boob firework" climbed towards the heavens.

And then.

Boo————-m!

The mystery number 4 shot was a peony.

Botan2

A large magnificent circle up 150m in the sky.

The launch was successful!

We couldn't speak for a while.

It was, of course, the first time any of us had seen fireworks from straight below. The beauty of it!

"Amazing..."

"All right. One more shot!"

"Yeah!"

We had confidence this time.

We placed the rain gutter on top again and rolled the snake firework.

And then

With a screaming sound the firework again climbed towards the heavens while painting another solitary path.

Boo————-m!

"Amazing... too amazing..."

"Do you think Ryo-kun... saw them?"

"Yeah. He saw them for sure."

Takaaki-kun then said.

"I wonder... from heaven..."

"Yeah... He might have seen it, too... Even if these fireworks were stolen."

"That boss is some artist. Those were amazing."

But we didn't have time to be unsettled in deep emotions.

"All right! First things first, let's get out of here!"

"Yeah!"

But, we did some fire extinguishing work just in case. The clean up of the tube that we had secured with concrete was also fairly troublesome.

And at that time.

The light of a flashlight shone upon us.

"Wha???????"

"Girl Bike. That's as far as you go."

There was the figure of one person on the path that we had come down on.


"Ch-Chuzai-... san? Why?"

*1 Hello in Japanese.

*2 Good evening in Japanese.

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"Ch... Chuzai... san?why?"

When I looked around, I saw Chuzai-san's Civic patrol car on top of the bridge. When had he arrived?

"... Girl Bike... I didn't think you were this stupid."

We prepared for ourselves.

But...

Batam.

We heard the sound of the door over there, and it seemed to us that the patrol car was moving slowly.

Was there another police officer in it?

But then,

Brum——

All of the sudden, the patrol car started running at an incredible pace.

"Ah?"

"Eh!?"

The person most surprised by this was Chuzai-san.

"Geh! W-waaaaait! Patrol car thief!"

Chuzai-san ran after the patrol car and left us behind. Of course he did. This wasn't a joke. But even though Chuzai-san was a former track team member, there was no way he could catch up to a car. A patrol car running away, and Chuzai-san chasing after it at full speed. It was of course, the first time I had seen such a thing since being born.

We were bewildered as to what happened.

But,

"You guys! Run! Hurry!"

There were figures of a couple people on the bank.

"Inoue....."

That's right. It was the figure of Great Inoue-kun and others who had been excluded from being members this time.

"What's going on, you guys!?"

Great Inoue-kun.

"Yeah. We got worried about the fireworks after all. We were at Saijoh's till just now. But since the fireworks went up..."

"Wha!? Then, what about that patrol car?"

"Yeah, cause we saw Chuzai when we arrived. That's Murayama."

I knew it...

It was because in our group, the only person who could drive a car "albeit illegally" was Murayama kun. That's right. The reason why Murayama-kun had one more suspension than Saijoh-kun was because of "driving a car without a license."

"Well... I'm thankful, but doesn't stealing a patrol car carry a bigger penalty than stealing fireworks?"

"Hmmm. Since it was an unexpected situation, we couldn't think of any other method. It's ok. Murayama won't get caught. Chiba and the others are helping him out on that end."

Helping him out with his escape? Things were getting very big.

It was true that it was hard to believe that Murayama-kun would fail at running away. We trusted him to not make mistakes very often. Although it was in the limited scope of being a member of our group.

"Either way, you guys either run or hide! The patrol car is ride-and-ditch. Chuzai'll come back soon!"

Hearing these words, the other members excluding Jaime hid in the thicket.

"You run, too!"

Great Inoue-kun prodded.

"... No. I'm ok. Chuzai-san said Girl Bike. There's no way to run."

"Jaime, how about you?"

"Erm, I'm okay, too. If there's no one else, everyone will be questioned, right?
For Jaime, it was a rare accurate argument.

"Inoue, what are you going to do?"

"Ahh. We're going to temporarily return to Saijoh's and think of counter measures."

"Are you ok with time?"

"Yeah. We've all said that we would be at the fireworks festival. It's still okay."

"I... see."

Inoue-kun and the others finally turned themselves around and started to leave the scene.

"Inoue! And all of you!"

The members turned around.

"Thank you. I'm happy."

All of them, raising their hands, left one by one.

At that time, Chuzai-san's patrol car returned from where he had found it.

"Gosh... What you guys do is crazy..."

Chuzai-san appeared especially relieved as he got off of the patrol car.

"Is it just you two?"

"Yeah. It's just us two."

"There's no mistake, right."

"Yes. There's no mista..."

But then.....

"Buha————!"

"Y, you stupid bastard————!"

We suddenly heard shouting from below. It was the other perpetrating members who had hid in the thicket.

"Why did you take a shi* in a place like this!?"

"Wha!? You guys are the ones that told me to do it in this thicket, right?"

"Dork! You couldn't realize that this was the same thicket before we ran here? Idiot!"

"I didn't know because it was dark! I was rushed, too!"

"Who is it? Who stepped on it? I'm too scared to smell my shoes!"

"SIIIGGH. What a terrible situation we're in!"

That's right. The thicket that they ran into was actually the thicket that Kubo-kun, unable to hold in his "how do you do", used to go poop.....

These guys... are idiots... The hard work of Great Inoue-kun and the others was wasted.

Takaaki-kun.

"H-huh? Mr. Policeman? ... You returned.....?"

"It appears as though it wasn't just the two of you. Girl Bike..."

"SIGH... It appears so..."

"Hey. Takaaki. And Kubo, and... All of you come over here too."

"Yes'sir..."

The other members ended up being caught because of Kubo-kun's poop. To be caught because of poop, I couldn't cry about it even if i wanted to.

"Who's the ringleader?"

"It's me." "It's me." "It's me." "It's me."

"It's ok for you guys to stick up for each other, but. It's larceny. You guys know that?"

"Yes..." "Yes." "Yes." "Yes."

"Well. It's great that friendship is so beautiful, but... the principal offender is Girl Bike, right?"

"Yes... These guys were just acting under my orders."

"Put your hands out."

"Wha?"

"Put your hands out in front of you."

"At 8:22PM, I place you under arrest for the charges of larceny, violation of the gunpowder law, violation of the fire safety laws."

I had handcuffs placed on me for the first time in my life that day. It was lighter, but colder than I thought it would be.

(In actuality, he said about six charges, but naturally I don't remember them. The ones I wrote here are approximate.)

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“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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“Now, how to take you guys... but...”

In any case, there were 6 offenders. Chuzai-san was in deep thought.

“Girl Bike, Tange (meaning Jaime), you guys get in the back. And then...”

Chuzai-san was twitching his nose.

That’s right. One of the four remaining stepped on the poop. It was like playing “old maid” to chose someone to ride from one of these guys.

“Ah-, you guys follow behind.”

Wha? Does such an escort exist? But, it was an intelligent choise. It would be a big problem to let the guy who stepped on the poop ride.

“Don’t run away.”

“Okay...”

Takaaki-kun and the others responded unwillingly.

Finally, the patrol car carrying the larceny suspects started off.

I stared outside of the window in silence while I was on the patrol car.

Mysteriously I wasn’t sad, resentful and of course it wasn’t funny.

On the news on TV, they often show a scene of a criminal after being caught and criticize them for having an “calm face,” but that’s not right. They’ve pushed all of their feelings deep inside of their minds and closed the doors tightly... ..so that they don’t feel anything. ...so that they don’t think of anything.

I silently and vaguely thought of things like my father and mother once in a while.

On the way, we passed a couple of fire engines with their lights on.

“Aah... they’re probably going to the dry riverbed...” I thought in a daze, and it made me recognize again what a big commotion I had caused.

Though, I didn’t have anything like reconsideration, just a whole lot of void. Just like scenery flowing past.

Jaime was also silent. I think that Chuzai-san asked us something on the way, but neither of us responded.

But.

The patrol car arrived at the city hospital instead of the police headquarters.
Even we were surprised about this.

“Why the hospital?”

To my question,

“Because Saijoh’s here.”

Chuzai-san answered.

“He’s got nothing to do with this!”

“That’s for me to decide.”

The patrol car finally stopped in front of the hospital entrance.

Starting with Saijoh, virtually everyone was there. They were waiting for the “saved remaining perpetrating members” to come back and report, but they appeared to be quite disturbed that Chuzai-san’s patrol car had come.

“Get off.”

I got out of the car with my handcuffs still on.
This caused everyone great shock.

Saijoh-kun screamed.

“Police! You—————!”

Both Great Inoue-kun and Chiba-kun held back Saijoh-kun who started towards Chuzai-san.

“Hold it in! Saijoh! You don’t have any more chances, remember!? Think about his feelings!”

“Girl Bike.”

Chuzai-san asked.

“Is he your friend?”

“... No, I don’t know him. ... Such an odd guy...”

“I ... see. Then, he’s not involved?”

“No.”

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa”

Do you know the word wailing?

Saijoh-kun’s scream at this time was exactly a wail.

Saijoh-kun crumbled down while being held by Inoue-kun and Chiba-kun.

But Chuzai-san.

“Be quiet. Saijoh. Think about other people’s troubles.”

Those words were quite calm, but had a sense of warmth in them.

“You guys. All follow me. Saijoh, too.”

“Where are we going?”

“Up.”

Saying just that, Chuzai-san had us follow him as he headed towards the elevator.

Chuzai-san said as if remembering.

“Ah... Takaaki, you guys come after. You guys **stink**.”

“Crap~.”

It wasn’t a joke. Or was it a joke?

Chuzai-san had gathered us on the roof. This was the only place in the building for this number of people to gather at a time like this.

When we arrived on the roof, there were already a whole lot of people related to the hospital gathered there. It was probably to gather evidence. The nurse, doctor and people from the office. I didn't recognize most of them. I was taken back by their numbers.
Also there was the figure of Mika-chan who had grabbed onto a nurse.

It seemed as though she was quite shocked to see for the first time, "Saijoh hanging his head down" and Retainer Number 1 with handcuffs.

"Saijoe-!"

"Saijoe-!"

Mika-chan yelled loudly twice, but there was no response from Saijoe- that she liked so much.

And then Mika-chan. Suddenly ran to in front of Chuzai-san, and grabbing his pants,

"Policeman! Saijoe-'s a good guy! So you don't bully him!"

She was shaking him hard.

"Saijoe-'s a good guy! So... his retainers are good guys too! If you bully them, I won't forgive you!"

"Sorry..."

The assigned nurse pulled Mika-chan away from Chuzai-san.

Mika-chan then grabbed onto the nurse, and

"Saijoe-'s a good guy. So don't bully him!"

She desperately repeated while crying.

To this even Chuzai-san was at a loss as to what to do.

"Mika-chan."

I spoke to her.

"Saijoe- and I are ok. By the way, did you see the fireworks?"

"Yeah! I saw them! Two! They were really pretty!"

"I see... How about Ryo-kun?"

"Yeah! We saw them together! It went Bam! and Boom! They were amazing!"

Jaime and I looked at each other.

We didn't say anything, but we were satisfied with this.

A mysterious sense of relief floated about.

“Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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[domainonline poker news](#)[кухненски столове](#)We could see a couple of red lights on the other side of the rails of the roof. It was exactly where we had launched the fireworks on the dry riverbed.

Perhaps they were fire engines. Or maybe patrol cars? Either way, it wasn't a small number.

And right next to the rail, were two more people standing.

It was Chuzai-san's wife and Minako-san.

Why????

Then Chuzai-san's wife,

“Ufufu. You got caught again?”

Chuzai-san's wife said her usual phrase with her usual tone.

I became quiet.

Minako-san.

“The fireworks. They were really pretty. You guys. Are amazing after all.”

Was she praising us?

In a situation like this?

I was a little confused by this and asked Chuzai-san.

“Chuzai-san, how, um..., did you, figure this out?”

“Hm?”

But, it was the nurse assigned to Saijoh-kun that answered this.

“Ufufu. Everyone in this hospital knew because Mika-chan was bragging to everyone that Saijoh-kun was going to launch fireworks today.”

“We never even thought that it would really be launched.”

Ha ha...

I responded with a unenergetic laugh.

I see. There's no way to seal a child's mouth...

Following that, Chuzai-san finally started talking.

“I heard it the other time I was at the hospital and was reminded of your intrigue. You were saying something about permits.”

I listened quietly.

“Things would be clear to me even if I wasn't a police officer, hearing that much. It was something that you guys would think of.”

“Since today was the day of the fireworks festival, I went there because I felt uneasy. You guys were there as expected.”

I see. It was true that Kouno had seen him.

“I had the fireworks artist verify. We found out that they were missing two. If you guys had stolen them and caused some kind of incident, it would be a huge problem. I came back after I had a local policeman relieve me.”

“Is... that so.....”

“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH”

Saijoh-kun who had been holding it in broke down crying.
Inoue-kun comforted him.

But.

It was just about that time.

As I was thinking that the eastern sky had lit up slightly,

Boom Boom Boom
Boo————m

Wha?

Wha?

hanabi2

In the sky exactly above where we had launched the fireworks... Multiple fireworks were dying the sky.

4 shots, 5 shots, 6 shots..... 10, 11...

Why?????

Boom Boom Boom
Scree————ch

15 shots, 16 shots...

It continued without a break.

While I was taken aback, Jaime said to me.

“Senpai... Those are repeater shots.....”

“Ah.....ahh. That’s ture... they are, but...”

Boom Boboom Boboom

Drawn marvelously in the sky, a ring. Chrysanthemum, peony...

"Surprised?"

Chuzai-san said.

"I asked the Fireworks artist. And had him come."

"You... did?"

"Yeah. But not like you guys. I paid him. I blew a quarter of my bonus though."

"We also put in a little too. But because it was so sudden, we didn't have very much..."

"N, nurse..."

"The hospital chipped in a little too."

Was he someone from the pharmacy? An older man in a business shirt said.

"Then, those fireworks... who...?"

"Hm. When I explained the situation to the boss, he came gladly. He even left the finale at the other fireworks festival to his apprentices."

Boss.....

"Ah... ah..."

I couldn't say a thing.

"But firemen are so hard headed. I had a really hard time getting permission. I threatened them with my pistol in the end. Wa ha ha."

Bad jokes as usual... Chuzai-san...

I see. The red lights gathered over there... those fire engines were for these fireworks...

The door that had been closed deep inside of my mind suddenly opened and tears started flowing.

As I tried to wipe the snot that had accumulated, I scratched my cheek with the corner of the handcuffs.

The tears seeped into that wound.

"So pretty... it's because of you guys... Ryo-kun's probably really happy."

Nurse...

I couldn't tell the shape of any of the fireworks that shone in my eyes because of the my tears.

But I remember thinking that I would probably never see fireworks this pretty again in my lifetime. Vaguely. But surely... The thought crossed my mind.

"Ryo-kun's fireworks festival" which probably a first for this town, lasted for about 20 minutes.

And once things quieted down a little, Chuzai-san said towards everyone.

"Everyone. Thank you for your help today. It really was an impromptu fireworks festival because of these guys but... There should be one more original firework, that the fireworks artist boss created, going up."

Everyone was focused on Chuzai-san. Chuzai-san brought out some notes. It seemed as though he wasn't used to these situations.

"Um, it's titled "Ryusei*." It's called this so that wishes can come true. If you say your wish three times before the shooting stars disappear, it may come true."

As if waiting for this talk, a repeater firework went up.

Boom

Boboom

It was a large large willow.

Everyone put their hands together in front of them.

Everyone's wish was:

I wish for Ryo-kun's illness to get better.

For their love to reach their dad in heaven...

The light from the fireworks illuminated Mika-chan's face.

The little girl with her hands clasped in front of her chest looked almost like an angel.

Finally, everyone left the roof and all that was remaining was Chuzai-san and us.

Chuzai-san said.

"I have someone you guys need to meet."

"Yes. I know."

We, the perpetrating group, formed a single line and waited for that person.

Finally, being led by a nurse, the boss arrived on the roof.

"Oh-! Brothers! How was it? 'Em fireworks."

"Boss..."

"Well, I launched all of those with 4 tubes. It's been a while. Some'in like this."

"Boss... sorry."

We bowed our heads.

"What. It's ok! What a sad story."

Chuzai-san said towards the boss.

"I arrested these guys under suspicion of stealing your fireworks."

"Ah? Stolen? Nope. I don't recollect that. I did sell two fireworks though. For 4000 Yen."

"So you're saying it wasn't larceny?"

"Ahh. Nope! Edo kids don't take back their words!"

Like I said, people born in the Miyagi prefecture aren't called Edo kids...

"Is that so? Then it'll be a nonprosecution."

“That’s that. Therefore that makes this a false arrest. It’s disappointing that my conviction rate will go down.”
Chuzai-san, after saying that, removed my handcuffs.

“Hey. Policeman.”

“Yes. What is it?”

“Haven’t they said from a long time ago? That “even Prometheus stole fireworks.”

* Ryusei means meteor.